

Bhavan Australia



LIFE ... LITERATURE ... CULTURE

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Words of Eternal Wisdom



"Each night, when I go to sleep, I die. And the next morning, when I wake up, I am reborn."

— Mahatma Gandhi

Whether one believes in a religion or not, and whether one believes in rebirth or not, there isn't anyone who doesn't appreciate kindness and compassion.

- Dalai Lama

*"I died as a mineral and became a plant,
I died as a plant and rose to animal,
I died as an animal and I was Man.
Why should I fear? When was I less by
dying?"*

— Rumi

"I did not begin when I was born, nor when I was conceived. I have been growing, developing, through incalculable myriads of millenniums... All my previous selves have their voices, echoes, promptings in me... Oh, incalculable times again shall I be born."

- Jack London

"I am confident that there truly is such a thing as living again, that the living spring from the dead, and that the souls of the dead are in existence."

- Socrates

"Genius is experience. Some seem to think that it is a gift or talent, but it is the fruit of long experience in many lives."

- Henry Ford

President's Page

Corruption is the biggest enemy of human rights.

Gambhir Watts OAM,
President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia
Ambassador of Multicultural Relations



Let us talk about philanthropy and how it can transform the society.

I received this message from the University of Sydney, my *alma mater*, which I thought of sharing with you.

A billion reasons to be thankful



Dear Gambhir

Today marks an incredible milestone for the University community, with [\\$1 billion given to transform research and education](#) – a first for any Australian university.

As one of our donors, please know you have our heartfelt thanks. You are part of a generous, future-looking community of 64,424 people who share our determination to make a better world for all of us.

We called it our [INSPIRED campaign](#), and it has already inspired a transformation of our campus. We now have 10 world-leading research facilities, including the Charles Perkins Centre, which tackles modern lifestyle diseases through cross-disciplinary partnerships, and the Sydney Nano Institute, which works at the atomic level to create new medicines and technologies.

In addition, there are the 35 professorial chairs that have been established in fields as diverse as sustainable agriculture and paediatric medicine. We have established a range of invaluable community programs, plus thousands of scholarships that give talented students perhaps their only chance to fulfil their potential.

Improving human health, protecting native wildlife, enriching the arts, making better cities, unravelling the secrets of the Universe. So much happens at the University, and thanks to you, we can do even more.

While the amount raised by our campaign is incredible, what it represents is more important. It speaks of the vision, for the future of you and our entire donor community. It speaks of purpose and possibility.

On behalf of the entire University community and all those that your generosity has touched along the way, we cannot thank you enough.

Kind regards

Dr Michael Spence AC (BA '85 LLB '87)

Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Philanthropy means the love of humanity. A conventional modern definition is "private initiatives, for the public good, focusing on quality of life", which combines an original humanistic tradition with a social scientific aspect developed in the 20th century.

Philanthropy has distinguishing characteristics separate from [charity](#); not all charity is philanthropy, or vice versa, though there is a recognized degree of overlap in practice. A difference commonly cited is that charity aims to relieve the pain of a particular social problem, whereas philanthropy attempts to address the root cause of the problem—the difference between the proverbial gift of a fish to a hungry person, versus teaching them how to fish.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (Bhavan) was established in India with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi and with contribution from some of the great philanthropists. Bhavan is a non-profit, non-religious, non-political NGO. Bhavan has been playing a crucial role in educational and cultural interactions in the world, holding aloft the best of Indian traditions and at the same time meeting the needs of modernity and multiculturalism. Bhavan's ideal is: "***The whole world is but one family***" and its motto says: "***Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides***".

Bhavan, perhaps the largest NGO's in the world, literally meaning the House of Indian Wisdom, has over 180 centres in India. The Sydney Centre is its first in Australia. The other overseas centres are in the UK, USA, Canada, Portugal, Mexico, Kuwait, Middle East and South Africa. The Bhavan has its headquarters in Bombay (Mumbai), India. Our Charter is expressed in the last pages of this magazine.

Bhavan's large numbers of publications have been well received all over the world and provide wholesome literature for the modern mind. Its schools in India provide the best education and resources to young people. Its cultural centres around the world facilitate intercultural activities and provide a forum for true understanding of Indian culture, multiculturalism and foster closer cultural ties among individuals, governments and cultural institutions in those countries.

WE HAVE A PROJECT TO BUILD OUR BUILDING FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUR DIVERSE ACTIVITIES AND SEEK YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT.

Quickstart Guide to Inspired Philanthropy ("Inspired Philanthropy: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Creating a Giving Plan and Leaving a Legacy." Book by Tracey Minkin)

1. Begin with your values and passions. Choose two to five issues, populations, or approaches. Weigh these against what the community needs and your ideas of how change happens.
2. Clarify what you want to accomplish with your charitable giving.
3. Think about your immediate and lifetime giving. How much do you want to give now, or in the future? What will be your lifetime impact?
4. Learn more about those areas you care about by talking with others and [doing research](#). Refine your priorities.
5. Research which groups match your mission and learn more about them. Check out the leadership of the organization, its vision, budget, productivity, and partnerships. Consider becoming more involved as a volunteer, [board member](#), or board committee member.
6. Decide what percentage of your giving you want to direct to each area of interest and the types of strategies you want to [fund](#).
7. Decide how you want to make your giving decisions. Will you go it alone or with others through a [giving circle](#) or a church group?
8. Decide how you want to be involved with the organizations you fund. The best donors get involved with their causes by becoming [volunteers](#) or activists.
9. Think about your lifetime contributions and leadership through [estate planning](#) and conversation with your [family](#) about values and community needs.
10. Join with others to consider the big issues, such as global warming, economic development, education, electoral reform, or health care.



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Publisher & General Editor:

Gambhir Watts OAM
president@bhavanaaustralia.org

Compiled and designed by: Anna Andriiashina

Cover credits: "Coming back: The Science of Reincarnation" by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Advertising:

pr@bhavanaaustralia.org
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia
Suite 102 Level L1 (Lower Ground)
515 Kent Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
T: +61 2 9283 6088,
E: pr@bhavanaaustralia.org
W: www.bhavanaaustralia.org

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Bhavan Australia includes a number of articles from Bhavan's Journal.

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HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA DAY

The marking of 26 January is an important date in Australia's history and has changed over time: starting as a celebration for emancipated convicts and evolving into what is now a celebration of Australia that reflects the nation's diverse people.

The date has long been a difficult symbol for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who see it as a day of sorrow and mourning.

The Australia Day timeline was compiled by historian Dr Elizabeth Kwan.

BEFORE 1770



Australian aboriginal people village

Aboriginal peoples had been living for more than 60 000 years on the continent we now know as Australia. At least 1600 generations of these peoples had lived and died here.

Europeans from the thirteenth century became interested in details from Asia about this land to the south. From the sixteenth century European cartographers and navigators gave the continent various names, including Terra Australis (Southern Land) and New Holland.

FOOTPRINTS

1770

Captain James Cook raised the Union Jack on what is now called Possession Island on 22 August to claim the eastern half of the continent as New South Wales for Great Britain.



Captain Cook landing australia

1788

FIRST FLEET SHIP

Captain Arthur Phillip, commander of the First Fleet of eleven convict ships from Great Britain, and the first Governor of New South Wales, arrived at Sydney Cove on 26 January and raised the Union Jack to signal the beginning of the colony.

THE 1800S

1804



Early almanacs and calendars and the Sydney Gazette began referring to 26 January as First Landing Day or Foundation Day. In Sydney, celebratory drinking, and later anniversary dinners became customary, especially among emancipists.

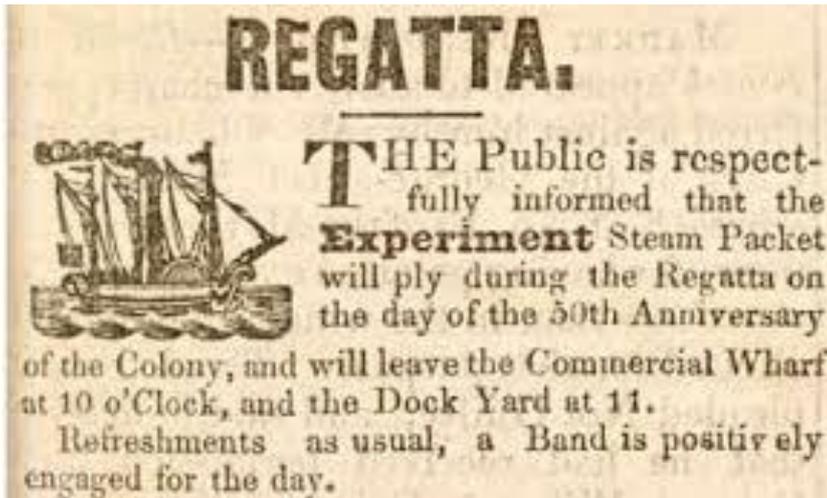
1818

BEER GLASSES CLINKING

Governor Macquarie acknowledged the day officially as a public holiday on the thirtieth anniversary. The previous year he accepted the recommendation of Captain Matthew Flinders, circumnavigator of the continent, that it be called Australia.

1838

REGATTA POSTER



Proclamation of an annual public holiday for 26 January marked the Jubilee of the British occupation of New South Wales. This was the second year of the anniversary's celebratory Sydney Regatta.

1871

RUNNERS

The Australian Natives' Association, formed as a friendly society to provide medical, sickness and funeral benefits to the native-born of European descent, became a keen advocate from the 1880s of federation of the Australian colonies within the British Empire, and of a national holiday on 26 January.

1888

CALENDAR

Representatives from Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and New Zealand joined NSW leaders in Sydney to celebrate the Centenary. What had begun as a NSW anniversary was becoming an Australian one. The day was known as Anniversary or Foundation Day.



THE 1900S

1901

The Australian colonies federated to form the Commonwealth of Australia. The Union Jack continued as the national flag, taking precedence over the Australian red and blue shipping ensigns gazetted in 1903. Melbourne was the interim federal capital. The Australian Capital Territory was created out of New South Wales in 1908, the federal capital named Canberra in 1913, and the Parliament House opened there in 1927.



1930

PEOPLE HOLDING PLACARDS

The Australian Natives' Association in Victoria began a campaign to have 26 January celebrated throughout Australia as Australia Day on a Monday, making a long weekend. The Victorian government agreed with the proposal in 1931, the other states and territories following by 1935.

1938

While state premiers celebrated the Sesquicentenary together in Sydney, Aboriginal leaders met there for a Day of Mourning to protest at their mistreatment by white Australians and to seek full citizen rights.

1946

The Australian Natives' Association prompted the formation in Melbourne of an Australia Day Celebrations Committee (later known as the Australia Day Council) to educate the public about the significance of Australia Day. Similar bodies emerged in the other states, which in rotation, acted as the Federal Australia Day Council.

1948

The Nationality and Citizenship Act created a symbolic Australian citizenship. Australians remained British subjects.

1954

The Australian blue ensign was designated the Australian national flag and given precedence over the Union Jack. The Australian red ensign was retained as the commercial shipping ensign.

1979

The Commonwealth government established a National Australia Day Committee in Canberra to make future celebrations 'truly national and Australia-wide'. It took over the coordinating role of the Federal Australia Day Council. In 1984 it became the National Australia Day Council, based in Sydney, with a stronger emphasis on sponsorship. Incorporation as a public company followed in 1990.

1984

Australians ceased to be British subjects. Advance Australia Fair replaced God Save the Queen as the national anthem.

1988

Sydney continued to be the centre of Australia Day spectacle and ceremony. The states and territories agreed to celebrate Australia Day in 1988 on 26 January, rather than with a long weekend. Aborigines renamed Australia Day, 'Invasion Day'. The Bondi Pavilion protest concert foreshadowed the Survival Day Concerts from 1992.

1994

Celebrating Australia Day on 26 January became established.

THE 2000S - PRESENT



Australia Day is an established and significant day in the national calendar with 4 in 5 Australians seeing it as 'more than a day off' and over 16,000 people choosing it to become new citizens each year.

Source: <https://www.australiaday.org.au/about-australia-day/history/>

REPUBLIC DAY 2019: INDIA DISPLAYS MILITARY MIGHT, CULTURAL GRANDEUR AT RAJPATH; WOMEN CONTINGENT LEADS WAY



Republic Day 2019: This year, the overall theme for the Republic Day celebrations was the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and tableaux of many states, themed on him. (Express Photo: Tashi Tobgyal)

*By Express Web Desk
New Delhi*

Seventy years since the birth of its Constitution, India celebrated Republic Day on Saturday with a grand annual parade at Rajpath amid heavy security cover. The ceremonial parade rolled down the majestic Rajpath with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in attendance as the chief guest along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, President Ram Nath Kovind, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman among several other leaders. Ramaphosa is the second South African president, after Nelson Mandela, to attend the grand event as its chief guest.

The event started with PM Modi paying his tributes to the martyrs by laying a wreath at Amar Jawan Jyoti after which President Kovind unfurled the national flag with the national anthem being played in the accompaniment of booming 21 gun salute in the background. The well-coordinated gun salute by seven cannons of

2281 Field Regiment starts with the first note of the national anthem and ends with the last. Special clocks are used to measure time in smaller units for precision.

Soon after this, President Kovind awarded the Ashoka Chakra — India's highest peacetime gallantry honour — to Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Wani, a militant-turned-soldier who was martyred while fighting a group of six militants in Shopian in Kashmir in November. Wani is the first Kashmiri to be conferred the Ashoka Chakra and the award was received by his wife and mother.



Several states, organisations and government departments also showcased their achievements

through 22 tableaux this year. (Express Photo: Tashi Tobgyal)

This year, the overall theme for the Republic Day celebrations was the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and tableaux of many states, themed on him. The highlights of the parade were four Indian National Army (INA) veterans, aged over 90 years, taking part in the parade, among the many firsts for a Republic Day parade as well as 'Nari Shakti' (women power) which was on full display on the ceremonial boulevard with an all-woman Assam Rifles contingent creating history this year by participating for the first time in the parade, which was led by Maj Khushboo Kanwar. Contingents of the Navy, Army Service Corps and a unit of Corps of Signals (transportable satellite terminal) were led by women officers too, as the crowd cheered.

The military might was on display, with the artillery gun system M777 American Ultra Light Howitzers, recently acquired from the US, and K9 Vajra, a self-propelled artillery gun, showcased on Rajpath, being new additions this year.



The parade also showcased 33 people on 9 motorcycles forming a human pyramid, lead by Subedar Major Ramesh. (Express Photo: Tashi Tobgyal)



Republic Day Parade 2019 at Rajpath in New Delhi on Saturday. (Express Photo: Praveen Khanna)

At Rajpath, India showcased its military might as well as its rich cultural heritage and traditions.

Several states, organisations and government departments also showcased their achievements through 22 tableaux this year. The tableaux of Sikkim, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, West Bengal, Tripura, Goa, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Uttarakhand were displayed on the occasion. The Governors unfurled the tricolour in their respective states to mark the day.

The event ended with the flypast which began with the Rudra formation comprising three ALH Mk IV WSI helicopters and featured Sukhois,





MiG fighter jets. The parade also witnessed a ‘vic’ formation of An-32 aircraft, whose lead plane flew on a mix of traditional and bio-fuel for the first time. It also showcased 33 people on 9 motorcycles forming a human pyramid, lead by Subedar Major Ramesh. A lone woman officer exhibited bike stunts as part of the iconic team. The event ended with the flypast which began with the Rudra formation comprising three ALH Mk IV WSI helicopters and featured Sukhois, MiG fighter jets. (Express Photo: Tashi Tobgyal) Scores of people had reached to watch the parade. The Indian Army’s T-90 tank, Ballway Machine Picate (BMP-II/IJK), Surface Mine Clearing System, 155 mm/52 Calibre Tracked Self-propelled Gun (K-9 Vajra), Transportable Satellite Terminal, Troop Level Radar and Akash Weapon System were also showcased at the parade.

Several senior leaders, including Home Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, and former prime ministers Manmohan Singh and HD Deve Gowda, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Ghulam Nabi Azad and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal were present on the occasion at Rajpath. Also, continuing his tradition of donning colourful

turbans at the Republic Day and the Independence Day, PM Modi wore a yellowish orange headgear with a red tail and traditional kurta pajama along with the trademark Nehru jacket.

PM Narendra Modi wore a yellowish orange headgear with a red tail. (Express Photo: Praveen Khanna)

SWAT women commandos, mobile hit teams, snipers are among the varied layers of security under which the national capital was placed for the Republic Day celebrations. Elaborate measures, including the deployment of anti-aircraft guns, were put in place to secure the airspace.

Source:
<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/republic-day-2019-70th-narendra-modi-cyril-ramaphosa-india-south-africa-army-parade-president-kovind-5555988>

KUMBHA MELA - THE WORLD'S MOST MASSIVE ACT OF FAITH

By Jack Hebner and David Osborn

They came by the millions! Some arrived on overcrowded trains carrying five times their normal capacity. Some came by bus, by car, some by ox drawn carts, and others rode on horses, camels, and even elephants. The rich and famous chartered private planes and helicopters, while the less affluent came on foot carrying their bed rolls and camping equipment in heavy bundles on their heads. Wave after wave, they formed a veritable river of humanity that flowed onto the banks of the Ganges at Allahabad to celebrate the greatest spiritual festival ever held in the history of the world, the Kumbha Mela.



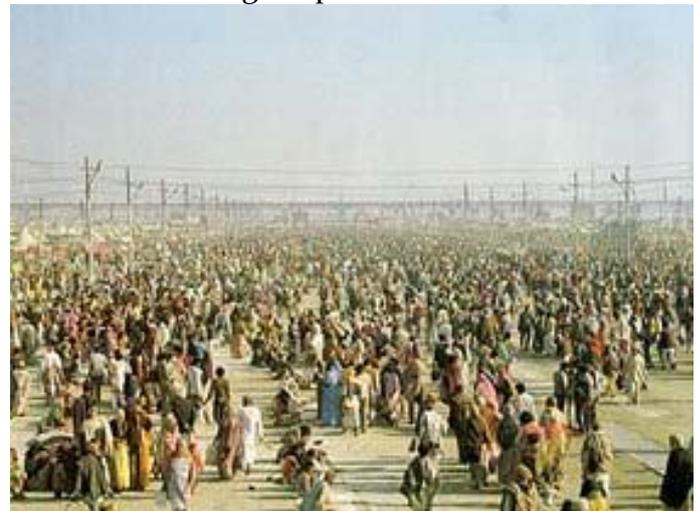
Kumbha Mela Pilgrims

Kumbha Mela has gained international fame as "the world's most massive act of faith." Pilgrims come to this holy event with such tremendous faith and in such overwhelming numbers that it boggles the mind. Faith is the most important thing for the pilgrims at Kumbha Mela, they have an "unflinching trust in something sublime".

To understand the significance of the Kumbha Mela and the important role that it plays in the spirituality of India, it is helpful to know something about the background of the sacred Ganges River. The devout believe that simply by bathing in the Ganges one is freed from their past sins (karma), and thus one becomes eligible for liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Of course it is said that a pure lifestyle is also required after taking bath, otherwise one will again be burdened by karmic reactions. The

pilgrims come from all walks of life, traveling long distances and tolerating many physical discomforts, such as sleeping in the open air in near freezing weather. They undergo these difficulties just to receive the benefit of taking a bath in the sacred river at Kumbha Mela.

This spectacle of faith has for many centuries attracted the curiosity of foreign travelers. Hiuen Tsiang of China, who lived during the seventh century, was the first to mention Kumbha Mela in his diary. He gave an eyewitness report that during the Hindu month of Magha (January-February) half a million people had gathered on the banks of the Ganges at Allahabad to observe a celebration for 75 days. The pilgrims, writes Hiuen Tsiang, assembled along with their king, his ministers, scholars, philosophers, and sages. He also reports that the king had distributed enormous quantities of gold, silver, and jewels in charity for the purpose of acquiring good merit and thus assuring his place in heaven.



Kumbha mela crowds

In the eight century, Shankara, a prominent Indian saint, popularized the Kumbha Mela among the common people, and soon the attendance began to grow to enormous proportions. Shankara placed special importance to the opportunity of associating with saintly persons while at Kumbha Mela. Both hearing from sadhus (holy men) and sacred bathing are still the two main focus at Kumbha Mela.

By 1977, the number of pilgrims attending Kumbha Mela had risen to 15 million! By 1989, the attendance was in the range of 29 million-

nearly double that of the previous record. Photographer David Osborn and I contributed to this year's record participation by spending seven austere weeks living in a tent on the banks of the Ganges, observing the Kumbha Mela with wonder and admiration.

The ancient origin of the Kumbha Mela is described in the time honored Vedic literatures of India as having evolved from bygone days of the universe when the demigods and the demons produced the nectar of immortality. The sages of old have related this story thus: once upon a time, the demigods and demons assembled together on the shore of the milk ocean which lies in a certain region of the cosmos. The demigods and demons desired to churn the ocean to produce the nectar of immortality, and agreed to share it afterwards. The Mandara Mountain was used as a churning rod, and Vasuki, the king of serpents, became the rope for churning. With the demigods at Vasuki's tail and the demons at his head, they churned the ocean for a 1,000 years. A pot of nectar was eventually produced, and both the demigods and demons became anxious. The demigods, being fearful of what would happen if the demons drank their share of the nectar of immortality, stole away the pot and hid it in four places on the Earth: Prayag (Allahabad) Hardwar, Ujjain, and Nasik. At each of the hiding places a drop of immortal nectar spilled from the pot and landed on the earth. These four places are believed to have acquired mystical power, and festivals are regularly held at each, Allahabad being the largest and most important.

Ganga devi Besides the Ganges, there are also two other sacred rivers located at Allahabad, the Yamuna and the Saraswati. The Yamuna, like the Ganges has its earthly origin in the Himalayas. The Saraswati, however, is a mystical river which has no physical form. It is believed that the Saraswati exists only on the ethereal or spiritual plane and is not visible to the human eye. This holy river is mentioned many times in India's sacred texts such as the Mahabharata and is said to be present at Allahabad where it joins the Yamuna and the Ganges.

This confluence of India's three most sacred rivers at Allahabad is called the sangam. The combined sanctity of the three holy rivers, coupled with the spiritual powers obtained from the pot of nectar of immortality, has earned

Allahabad the rank of tirtharaja, the king of holy places.

The main highlight for most pilgrims during a Kumbha Mela is the observance of a sacred bath at the sangam. It is said that a bath in either of the sacred rivers has purifying effects, but where the three rivers meet, the bather's purification is increased one hundred times. Furthermore, it is said that when one takes a bath at the sangam during the Kumbha Mela, the influence is one thousand times increased.



Multitudes of Pilgrims Holy Baths

According to astrological calculations, the Kumbha Mela is held every twelve years and begins on Makar Sankranti, the day when the sun and moon enter Capricorn and Jupiter enters Aries. The astrological configuration on Makar Sankranti is called "Kumbha snana-yoga" and is considered to be especially auspicious, as it is said that the passage from Earth to the higher planets is open at that time, thus allowing the soul to easily attain the celestial world. For such reasons it is understandable why the Kumbha Mela has become so popular among all classes of transcendentalists in India.

This year Kumbha Mela began with all the pomp and glory for which it is famous. The temperature dropped to 35 degrees Fahrenheit on the evening of the 13th, but bathers were not to be discouraged. Just past midnight, thousands began to enter the confluence of the three rivers, immersing themselves in the icy cold water. Loud chanting of "Bolo Ganga Mai ki jai (all glory to Mother Ganga)" filled the clear night air as the pilgrims washed away their bad karma. They came away from the bathing area wrapped in blankets and shivering from the cold. But as

quickly as they came out of the water, thousands more came in their wake. With continual chants of " Bolo Ganga Mai ki jai" they entered the waters.

At dawn the sky reddened and the sun rose to reveal a crowd of five million enthusiasts slowly advancing towards the sangam. From the center of that mass of humanity came a marvelous procession announcing the official beginning of the Kumbha Mela. Bands played, people danced in jubilation, and colorful flags and banners flew above the crowd.



Ganges Sunrise Sadhu Procession

At the head of the procession were the nagas, India's famed naked holy men. These holy men engage themselves in renunciation of the world in search of equilibrium. They hope to escape the world's concomitant reactions and suffering by their austere practices such as complete celibacy and non-accumulation of material possessions. Thus they are known as liberationists. With matted locks of hair, their bodies covered in ashes, and their tridents (the symbol of a follower of Shiva) raised high, they descended upon the bathing area. Entering the water in a tumult, blowing conchshells and singing " Shiva ki jai, Ganga ki jai," they splashed the sacred waters upon each other and played just like children. Indeed, they are said to be the very children of the Ganges.

Next came the Vaisnava vairagis, the wandering mendicants who dedicate everything to Visnu, the Sustainer. These saints live a life of service and complete dedication. Then came the innumerable other sects of ascetics dressed in saffron colored cloth and carrying their staffs of renunciation. All the centuries gone by of India's

spiritual evolution were simultaneously there together in the procession. Each in turn bathed in the sangam.



Kumbha mela sadhus Pilgrims in boat

Several hours passed before the procession had finished. Then began the mass bathing of the pilgrims. From the high banks of the river one could see the dark blue water of the Yamuna mixing with the silver gray water of the Ganges. Bathers, immersed up to the waist, scooped up water with folded palms and offered it to heaven in a timeless gesture. Boatmen rowed their boats full of pilgrims to a small sandbar in the middle of the sangam which soon disappeared under a cloud of bathers.

There was none too young or old for this occasion. A young mother sprinkled a few drops of the rivers' water over the head of her newborn baby, asking God to bless her child with a good life and prosperity. In another place an elderly couple eased themselves into the cold water. Some bathers made offerings of flowers, sweets, and colored dyes to the sacred waters, while others

offered Vedic hymns. The chanting of OM - the supreme combination of letters - and Sanskrit mantras issued from the lips of every pilgrim.

As night fell, thousands of campfires could be seen burning along the riverbanks. In the central festival area, gaily decorated pandals (large tents) accommodated the thousands who listened to some of India's most exalted gurus lecturing on spiritual and philosophical topics.

In some pandals there were Indian drama and classical dance groups whose exotic costumes and performances attracted large audiences. In other pandals there were elaborate displays and dioramas illustrating the stories from India's ancient epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. There was so much to see and do that there was never a dull moment.

Some pilgrims prefer to come to the Kumbha Mela on the days of the big sacred baths like Makar Sankranti and then return home, while others prefer to set up camp and stay for the duration. This year at Kumbha Mela there was six scheduled days for important baths. Those who remained for the full 41 days of the festival and observe all the important baths are called kalpvasis.

This year the Indian government spent more than 8 million dollars on preliminary organization for the Kumbha Mela. According to national newspaper reports, arrangements provided 5,000 gallons of purified drinking water every minute; 8,000 buses which shuttle pilgrims in and out of the festival area that spread over 3,000 acres; 16,000 outlets and 6,000 poles which provided electrical facilities; 6,000 sweepers and sanitation employees who worked around the clock to maintain health standards; 9 pontoon bridges which spanned the Ganges at intervals; 20,000 policemen, firemen, and the Indian National Guard who kept a constant vigil at checkpoints and with closed circuit TV guarded against traffic congestion and other possible outbreaks or disturbances; and 100 doctors and nurses on call at all times at medical assistance stations.

An entire city sprang up along the banks of the river during the Kumbha Mela complete with markets, hospitals, and even a tourist camp to accommodate visitors from foreign countries. The tourist camp informed me that they had sheltered over 1,000 visitors from abroad during the festivities, most being from Europe and South



Tent City

America. Some of these visitors from abroad had never been to India before. Others seemed as well acquainted with what was happening as did the Indians. Kumbha Mela top

In the market areas all the required necessities and luxuries of Kumbha Mela were for sale. In one place fruits and fresh vegetables were available. In another place wool blankets, which sold briskly, were piled in big stacks for easy selection. Along the main thoroughfares gypsies spread their wares which included different shapes and sizes of brass pots and bowls, beads for meditation, exotic perfumes, incense like kastori(musk) and chandan (sandalwood), and even tiger's claws set in gold.



Snake charmer Pilgrims

It was also interesting to note that all the food arrangements throughout the festival were vegetarian. There was not a trace of meat, fish or eggs to be found in any camp or in any public eating place. We learned that meat is strictly taboo amongst all types of transcendentalists in India.

For the novelty seekers there was also a wide selection of oddities in the market. For a rupee or two one could employ a snake charmer who, when playing on his pungi (snake charmer's flute) would make the cobras dance, swaying to and fro. It is a long standing belief that the cobra is charmed by the sound of the pungi. Having observed several of these performances , however, it was our conclusion that the snake charmer charms his audience rather than the snake.

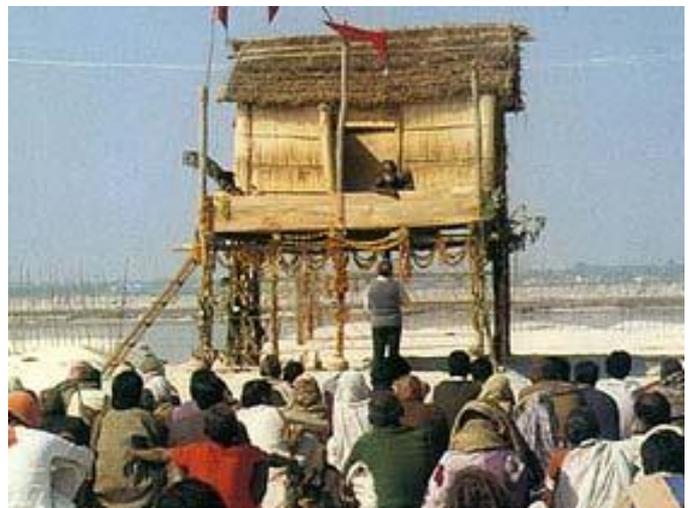
Many palm readers and mystic soothsayers set up shop along the Ganges offering passers-by a look into the future. Astrology and palmistry are traditional sciences in India, but one could not help but think that some of these "mystics" were simply out to turn a fast rupee from a gullible public. No doubt that among the sincere and authentic spiritualists at Kumbha Mela there were also the cheaters and hence the cheated. Buyer beware.

The camel, a hardy beast of burden, used in India for centuries to transport cargo long distances and through difficult terrain, was the unsung hero of Kumbha Mela. Carrying heavy loads of firewood, tents, and foodstuffs on their raised backs these awkward creatures formed the very lifeline to the Kumbha Mela residents. In the soft sand, cars, trucks, and even horse carts often got stuck. But the camel was rugged and the goods always got through.

For everyone at Kumbha Mela, early mornings were the most austere time of day because it was always colder than at any other time. However, chilly sunrise is considered the most auspicious time of the day for spiritual practices. Every day at dawn , thousands arose early to bathe in the Ganges and return to their camps to change mantras and meditate.

At the northern end of the festival grounds, cast against the stil blue sky, stood a lone grass hut built upon sturdy stilts. This was the ashrama of Devara Baba who, according to his followers, is more than 200 years old. Devara Baba is a lifelong vegetarian and celibate yogi. His admirers believe that his exceptional longevity is due to the fact that he only drinks and bathes in the Ganges, whose waters are considered very sacred. When we asked Devara Baba about his exact age, he replied, " I have lost count of the years. It has been a very long time."

Every morning and evening tens of thousands of pilgrims walked the two mile stretch along the Ganges to the ashrama of Devara Baba with the hope that they might get a glimpse of this ancient sage. Much to their delight Devara Baba was always willing and even happy to accommodate them. Sitting on the veranda of his simple raised hut, the old sage relaxed in the warm rays of sunlight and blessed his visitors. Sometimes smiling or raising his hand in a gesture of grace Devara Baba radiated the aura of peacefulness. Some pilgrims brought offerings of fruits and flowers, while others came only with their prayers for blessings. It was our prayer to the sage that he allow us to take a few photographs, and in his usual gracious manner he consented.



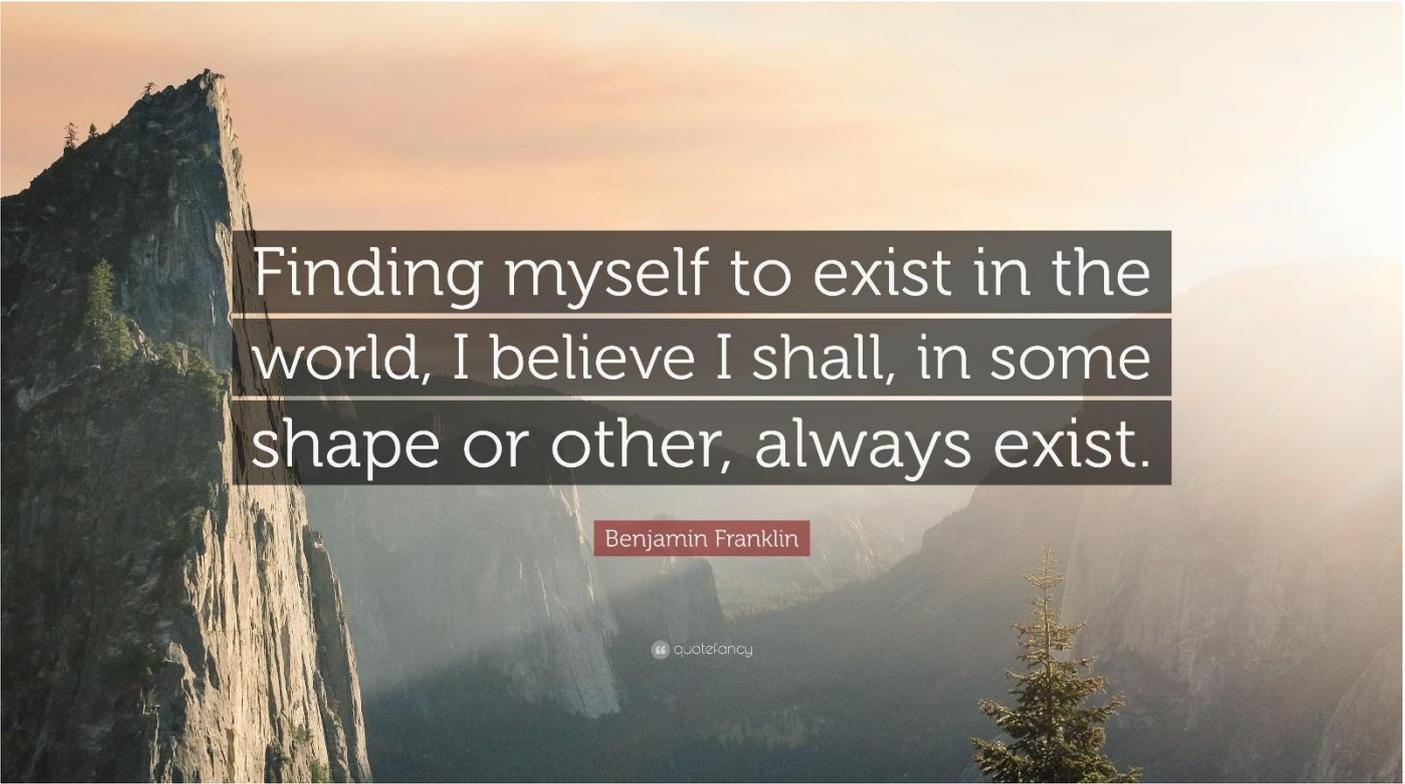
Devara Baba

As prominent as Devara Baba was, we sensed that there were many great souls who went undetected in our midst. We photographed until we ran out of film and were left only with a feeling of helplessness. Kumbha Mela was indeed a magnificent and awesome encounter. It was impossible to capture the festival. Indeed, it was the festival that captured us. Words, film, print, and paper can not do justice to the event — it is one that has to be experienced personally.

Source:

<http://www.archaeologyonline.net/artifacts/kumbha-mel>

REINCARNATION: SOCRATES TO SALINGER



Finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall, in some shape or other, always exist.

Benjamin Franklin

quotezfamily

For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

Does life begin with birth and end with death? Have we lived before? Such questions are normally identified with religions of the East, where the life of man is known to endure not only from the cradle to the grave, but through millions of ages, and acceptance of the idea of rebirth is nearly universal. As Arthur Schopenhauer, the great nineteenth-century German philosopher, once observed, "Were an Asiatic to ask me for a definition of Europe, I should be forced to answer him: It is that part of the world which is haunted by the incredible delusion that man was created out of nothing, and that his present birth is his first entrance into life."

Indeed, the dominant ideology of the West, material science, has for several centuries stifled any serious or widespread interest in the preexistence and survival of consciousness beyond the present body. But throughout Western history, there have always been thinkers who have understood and affirmed the immortality of consciousness and transmigration of the soul. And a multitude of philosophers, authors, artists, scientists, and

politicians have given the idea thoughtful consideration.

ANCIENT GREECE

Among the ancient Greeks, Socrates, Pythagoras, and Plato may be numbered among those who made reincarnation an integral part of their teachings. At the end of his life, Socrates said, "I am confident that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead."² Pythagoras claimed he could remember his past lives, and Plato presented detailed accounts of reincarnation in his major works. Briefly, he held that the pure soul falls from the plane of absolute reality because of sensual desire and then takes on a physical body. First, the fallen souls take birth in human forms, the highest of which is that of the philosopher, who strives for higher knowledge. If his knowledge becomes perfect, the philosopher can return to an eternal existence. But if he becomes hopelessly entangled in material desires, he descends into the animal species of life. Plato believed that gluttons and drunkards may become asses in future lives, violent and unjust people may take birth as wolves and hawks, and blind followers of social convention may become bees or ants. After some time, the soul again attains the human form and another chance to achieve liberation.³ Some scholars believe that Plato and other early Greek

philosophers derived their knowledge of reincarnation from mystery religions like Orphism, or from India.

Reincarnation: Socrates to Salinger 3
Judaism, Christianity, Islam

Hints of reincarnation are also common in the history of Judaism and early Christianity. Information about past and future lives is found throughout the Cabala, which according to many Hebraic scholars represents the hidden wisdom behind the scriptures. In the Zohar, one of the principal Cabalistic texts, it is said, "The souls must reenter the absolute substance whence they have emerged. But to accomplish this, they must

develop all the perfections, the germ of which is planted in them; and if they have not fulfilled this condition during one life, they must commence another, a third, and so forth, until they have acquired the condition which fits them for reunion with God."⁴ According to the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, the Hasidic Jews hold similar beliefs.'

In the third century A.D., the theologian Origen, one of the fathers of the early Christian Church, and its most accomplished Biblical scholar, wrote, "By some inclination toward evil, certain souls . . . come into bodies, first of men; then through their association with the irrational passions, after the allotted span of human life, they are changed into beasts, from which they sink to the level of . . . plants. From this condition they rise again through the same stages and are restored to their heavenly place." There are many passages in the Bible itself indicating that Christ and his followers were aware of the principle of reincarnation. Once, the disciples of Jesus asked him about the Old

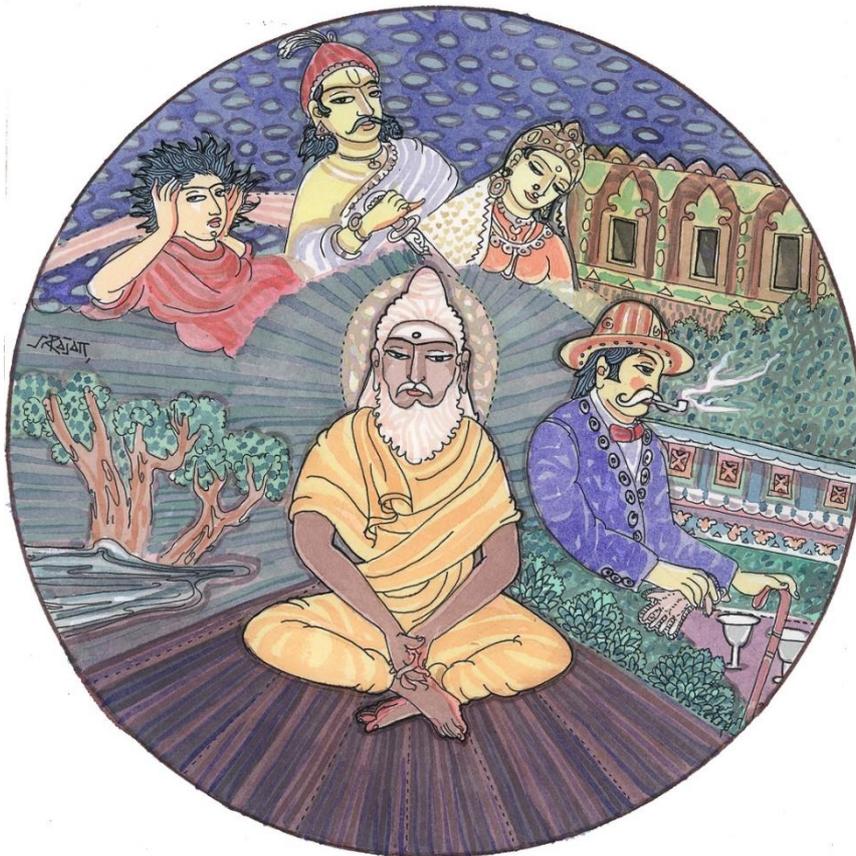
Testament prophecy that Elias would reappear on earth. In the Gospel of St. Matthew we read, "And Jesus answered them, Elias shall truly first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not.... Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."⁷ In other words, Jesus declared that John the Baptist, who was beheaded by Herod, was a reincarnation of the prophet Elias. In another instance, Jesus and his disciples came across a man blind from birth. The disciples asked Jesus, "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" Regardless who had sinned, Jesus re-plied, here was a chance to

show a work of God. He then cured the man. Now, had the man been born blind for a sin of his own, it must have been a sin done before his birth—that is, in a previous life. And this was a suggestion that Jesus did not dispute.

The Koran says, "And you were dead, and He brought you back to life. And He shall cause you to die, and shall bring you back to life, and in the

end shall gather you unto Himself."⁹ Among the followers of Islam, the Sufis especially believe that death is no loss, for the immortal soul continually passes through dif-ferent bodies. Jalalu 'D-Din Rumi, a famous Sufi poet, writes, I died as a mineral and became a plant, I died as a plant and rose to animal, I died as animal and I was man.

Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?"¹⁰ The timeless Vedic scriptures of India confirm that the soul, according to its identification with material nature, takes one of 8,400,000 forms and, once em-bodied in a certain species of life,



evolves automatically from lower to higher forms, ultimately attaining a human body.

Thus, all of the major Western religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—have definite threads of re-incarnation throughout the fabric of their teachings, even though the official custodians of dogma ignore or deny them.

THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE

Under circumstances that to this very day remain shrouded in mystery, the Byzantine emperor Justinian in 553 A.D. banned the teachings of preexistence of the soul from the Roman Catholic Church. During that era, numerous Church writings were destroyed, and many scholars now believe that references to reincarnation were purged from the scriptures. The Gnostic sects, although severely persecuted by the church, did, however, manage to keep alive the doctrine of reincarnation in the West. (The word gnostic is derived from the Greek *gnosis*, meaning "knowledge.")

During the Renaissance, a new flowering of public interest in reincarnation occurred. One of the prominent figures in the revival was Italy's leading philosopher and poet Giordano Bruno, who was ultimately sentenced to be burned at the stake by the Inquisition because of his teachings about reincarnation. In his final answers to the charges brought against him, Bruno defiantly proclaimed that the soul "is not the body" and that "it may be in one body or in another, and pass from body to body."

Because of such suppression by the Church, the teachings of reincarnation then went deeply underground, surviving in Europe in the secret societies of the Rosicrucians, Freemasons, Cabalists, and others.

THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

During the Age of Enlightenment, European intellectuals began to free themselves from the constraints of Church censorship. The great philosopher Voltaire wrote that the doctrine of reincarnation is "neither absurd nor useless," adding, "It is not more surprising to be born twice than once.

One may be surprised to note, however, that several of America's founding fathers were fascinated by and ultimately accepted the idea of reincarnation, as interest in the subject made its way across the Atlantic to America. Expressing

his firm belief, Benjamin Franklin wrote, "Finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall, in some shape or other, always exist."

In 1814, former U.S. President John Adams, who had been reading books about Hindu religion, wrote another ex-president, "the sage of Monticello," Thomas Jefferson, about the doctrine of reincarnation. After revolting against the Supreme Being, some souls were hurled, Adams wrote, "down to the regions of total darkness." They were then, the statesman said, "released from prison, permitted to ascend to earth and migrate into all sorts of animals, reptiles, birds, beasts, and men, according to their rank and character, and even into vegetables, and minerals, there to serve on probation. If they passed without reproach their several graduations, they were permitted to become cows and men. If as men they behaved well . . . they were restored to their original rank and bliss in Heaven."

In Europe, Napoleon was fond of telling his generals that in a previous life he was Charlemagne.⁵ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, one of the greatest German poets, also believed in reincarnation and may have encountered the idea in his readings in Indian philosophy. Goethe, renowned as a dramatist and scientist, as well, once remarked, "I am certain that I have been here as I am now a thousand times before, and I hope to return a thousand times."

TRANSCENDENTALISM

Interest in reincarnation and Indian philosophy also ran strong among the American Transcendentalists, including Emerson, Whitman, and Thoreau. Emerson wrote, "It is a secret of the world that all things subsist and do not die, but only retire a little from sight and afterwards return again. . . . Nothing is dead; men feign themselves dead, and endure mock funerals and mournful obituaries, and there they stand looking out of the window, sound and well, in some new and strange disguise." From the *Katha Upanisad*, one of the many books of ancient Indian philosophy in his library, Emerson quoted, "The soul is not born; it does not die; it was not produced from anyone . . . Unborn, eternal, it is not slain, though the body is slain." Thoreau, the philosopher of Walden Pond, wrote, "As far back as I can remember, I have unconsciously referred to the experiences of a

previous state of exis-tence." Another sign of Thoreau's deep interest in reincarnation is a manuscript, discovered in 1926, en-titled "The Transmigration of the Seven Brahmanas." This short work is an English translation of a story about reincarnation from an ancient Sanskrit history. The transmigration episode follows the lives of seven sages through progressive incarnation_s as hunters, princes, and animals. And Walt Whitman, in his poem "Song of Myself," writes,

***"I know I am deathless ...
We have thus far exhausted
trillions of winters and summers,
There are trillions ahead, and
trillions ahead of them."***

In France, famed author Honore Balzac wrote an en-tire novel about reincarnation, Seraphita. There Balzacstates, "All human beings go through a previous life . . . Who knows how many fleshly forms the heir of heaven occupies before he can be brought to under-stand the value of that silence and solitude whose starry plains are but the vestibule of spiritual worlds?"²¹

In David Copperfield, Charles Dickens explored an experience that hints at remembrances from past lives, deja-vu. "We all have some experience of a feeling, that comes over us occasionally, of what we are saying and doing having been said and done before, in a remote time—of our having been surrounded, dim ages ago, by the same faces, objects, and circumstances. . . ." ²²

And in Russia, the eminent Count Leo Tolstoy wrote, "As we live through thousands of dreams in our present life, so is our present life only one of many thousands of such lives which we enter from the other, more real life ... and then return after death. Our life ism but one of the dreams of that more real life, and so it is endlessly, until the very last one, the very real life—the life of God."

THE MODERN AGE

As we enter the twentieth century, we find the idea of reincarnation attracting the mind of one of the West's most influential artists, Paul Gauguin, who dur-ing his final years in Tahiti wrote that when the physical organism breaks up, "the soul survives." It then takes on another body, Gauguin wrote, "degrading or elevating according to merit or demerit." The artist believed that the idea of continued rebirth had

first been taught in the West by Pythagoras, who learned it from the sages of ancient India.²⁴

U. S. auto magnate Henry Ford once told a newspaper interviewer, "I adopted the theory of re-incarnation when I was twenty-six." Ford said, "Genius is experience. Some seem to think that it is a gift or talent, but it is the fruit of long experience in many lives."²⁵ In a similar fashion, U.S. general George S. Patton believed that he had acquired his military skills on ancient battlefields.

Reincarnation is a recurring theme in Ulysses, by Irish novelist and poet James Joyce. In one famous passage in this novel, Joyce's hero, Mr. Bloom, tells his wife, "Some people believe that we go on living in another body after death, that we lived before. They call it reincarnation. That we all lived before on the earth thousands of years ago or on some other planet. They say we have forgotten it. Some say they remem-ber their past lives."

Jack London made reincarnation the major theme of his novel The Star Rover, in which the central character says, "I did not begin when I was born, nor when I was conceived. I have been growing, developing through incalculable myriads of millenniums. . . All my pre-vious selves have their voices, echoes, promptings in me. ... Oh, incalculable times again shall I be born, and yet the stupid dolts about me think that by stretch-ing my neck with a rope they will make me cease."

In his classic novel of the search for spiritual truth, Siddhartha, Nobel laureate Herman Hesse wrote, "He saw all these forms and faces in a thousand relation-ships to each other. . . . None of them died, they only changed, were always reborn, continually had a new face: only time stood between one face and another."²⁸

Numerous scientists and psychologists have believed in reincarnation as well. One of the greatest modern psychologists, Carl Jung, used the concept of an eternal self that undergoes many births as a tool in his attempts to understand the deepest mysteries of the self and consciousness. "I could well imagine that I might have lived in former centuries and there encountered questions I was not yet able to answer; that ti had to be born again because I had not fulfilled the task that was given to me,"²⁹ Jung said.

British biologist Thomas Huxley noted that "the doctrine of transmigration" was a "means of constructing a plausible vindication of the ways of the cosmos to man," and warned that "none but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the grounds of inherent absurdity." 3°

One of the leading figures in the field of psychoanalysis and human development, American psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, is convinced that reincarnation goes to the very core of every man's belief system. "Let us face it: 'deep down' nobody in his right mind can visualize his own existence without assuming that he has always lived and will live hereafter," 31 the author wrote. Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest political figures of modern times and apostle of nonviolence, once explained how a practical understanding of re-incarnation gave him hope for his dream of world peace. Gandhi said, "I cannot think of permanent enmity between man and man, and believing as I do in the theory of rebirth, I live in the hope that if not in this birth, in some other birth I shall be able to hug all of humanity in friendly embrace.""

In one of his most famous short stories, J. D. Salinger introduces Teddy, a precocious young boy who recalls his reincarnation experiences and speaks forthrightly about them. "It's so silly. All you do is get the heck out of your body when you die. My gosh, everybody's done it thousands of times. Just because they don't remember, it doesn't mean they haven't done it.""

Jonathan Livingston Seagull, hero of the novel by the same name, whom author Richard Bach described as "that brilliant little fire that burns within us all," goes through a series of reincarnations that lead him from earth to a heavenly world and back again, to enlighten the less fortunate gulls. One of Jonathan's mentors inquires, "Do you have any idea how many lives we must have gone through before we even got the first idea that there is more to life than eating, or fighting, or power in the Flock? A thousand lives, Jon, ten thousand! And then another hundred lives until we began to learn that there is such a thing as perfection, and another hundred again to get the idea that our purpose for living is to find that perfection and show it forth."

Nobel laureate Isaac Bashevis Singer often speaks of past lives, rebirth, and the immortality of the soul in his masterful short stories. "There is no

death. How can there be death if everything is part of the God-head? The soul never dies and the body is never really alive." 35

And British poet laureate John Masefield, in his well-known poem about past and future lives, writes,

***"I hold that when a person dies
His soul returns again to earth;
Arrayed in some new flesh disguise,
Another mother gives him birth
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain
The old soul takes the road again."***



Musician, songwriter, and celebrated ex-Beatle George Harrison's serious thinking about reincarnation is revealed in his private thoughts on interpersonal relationships. "Friends are all souls that we've known in other lives. We're drawn to each other. That's how I feel about friends. Even if I have only known them a day, it doesn't matter. I'm not going to wait till I have known them for two years, because anyway, we must have met somewhere before, you know." 37 Reincarnation is once again attracting the minds of intellectuals and the general public in the West. Films, novels, popular songs, and periodicals now treat re-incarnation with ever-increasing frequency, and millions of Westerners are rapidly joining ranks with the more than 1.5

billion people, including Hindus, Buddhists, Taoists, and members of other faiths, who have traditionally understood that life does not begin at birth nor end with death. But simple curiosity or belief is not sufficient. It is merely the first step in understanding the complete science of reincarnation, which includes knowledge of how to free oneself from the, miserable cycle of birth and death.

Bhagavad-gita:

The Timeless Sourcebook on Reincarnation

Many Westerners, in order to gain a deeper understanding about reincarnation, are turning to the original sources of knowledge about past and future lives. Among all available literatures, the Sanskrit Vedas of India are the oldest on earth and present the most comprehensive and logical explanations of the, science of reincarnation, teachings that have maintained their viability and universal appeal for more than five thousand years.

The most fundamental information about reincarnation appears in Bhagavad-gita, the essence of the Upanisads and of all Vedic knowledge. The Gita was spoken fifty centuries ago by Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to His friend and disciple Arjuna on a battlefield in northern India.

A battlefield is the perfect place for a discussion about reincarnation, for in combat, men directly confront the fateful questions of life, death, and the afterlife.

As Kṛṣṇa begins to speak on the immortality of the soul, He tells Arjuna, "Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be." The Gītā further instructs,

"That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul."

The soul—here we speak of something so subtle that it is not immediately verifiable by the limited human mind and senses. Therefore, not everyone will be able to accept the existence of the soul. Kṛpā. informs Arjuna, "Some look on the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, and some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all."

On the Battlefield of Kuruksetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa instructs His friend and devotee Arjuna about the science of reincarnation.

Accepting the existence of the soul is, however, not merely a matter of faith. Bhagavad-gītā appeals to the evidence of our senses and logic, so we may accept its teachings with some degree of rational conviction and not blindly, as dogma.

It is impossible to understand reincarnation unless one knows the difference between the actual self (the soul) and the body. The ad helps us see the nature of the soul by the following example. "As the sun alone illuminates all this universe, so does the living entity, one within the body, illuminate the entire body by consciousness."

Consciousness is concrete evidence of the presence of the soul within the body. On a cloudy day, the sun may not be visible, but we know it is there in the sky by the presence of sunlight. Similarly, we may not be able to directly perceive the soul, but we may conclude it is there by the presence of consciousness. In the absence of consciousness, the body is simply a lump of dead matter. Only the presence of consciousness makes this lump of dead matter breathe, speak, love, and fear. In essence, the body is a vehicle for the soul, through which it may fulfill its myriad material desires. The Gītā explains that the living entity within the body is "seated as on a machine made of the material energy." The soul falsely identifies with the body, carrying its different conceptions of life from one body to another as the air carries aromas. Just as an automobile cannot function without the presence of a driver, similarly, the material body cannot function without the presence of the soul.

As one grows older, this distinction between the conscious self and the physical body becomes more obvious. Within his lifetime a person can observe that his body is constantly changing. It does not endure, and time proves the child ephemeral. The body comes into existence at a certain time, grows, matures, produces by-products (children), and gradually dwindles and dies. The physical body is thus unreal, for it will, in due time, disappear. As the Gītā explains, "Of the nonexistent there is no endurance." But despite all the changes of the material body, consciousness, a symptom of the soul within, remains unchanged. ("Of the eternal there is no change.") Therefore, we may logically conclude that consciousness possesses an innate quality of permanence that enables it to survive the dissolution of the body. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, "For

the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. . . . He is not slain when the body is slain." But if the soul is "not slain when the body is slain," then what becomes of it? The answer given in the Bhagavad-gita is that the soul enters another body. This is reincarnation. This concept may be difficult for some people to accept, but it is a natural phenomenon, and the Gita gives logical examples to aid our understanding: "As the embodied soul continuously passes, this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change."

In other words, man reincarnates even in the course of one lifetime. Any biologist will tell you that the body's cells are constantly dying and being replaced by new ones. In other words, each of us has a number of "different" bodies in this very life. The body of an adult is completely different from the body the same person had as an infant. Yet despite bodily changes, the person within remains the same. Something similar happens at the time of death. The self undergoes a final change of body. The Gird says, "As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones." Thus the soul remains entrapped in an endless cycle of births and deaths. "One who has taken his birth is sure to die, and after death one is sure to take birth again," the Lord tells Arjuna.

According to the Vedas, there are 8,400,000 species of life, beginning with the microbes, rising through the fish, plants, insects, reptiles, birds, and animals to the humans and demigods. According to their desires, the living entities perpetually take birth in these species.

The mind is the mechanism that directs these trans-migrations, propelling the soul to newer and newer bodies. The Gita explains, "Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, . . . that state he will attain without fail [in his next life]." Everything we have thought and done during our life makes an impression on the mind, and the sum total of all these impressions influences our final thoughts at death. According to the quality of these thoughts, material nature awards us a suitable body. Therefore, the type of body that we have now is the expression of our consciousness at the time of our last death.

"The living entity, thus taking another gross body, obtains a certain type of ear, eye, tongue,

nose, and sense of touch, which are grouped about the mind. He thus enjoys a particular set of sense objects," the Glitz explains. Further, the path of reincarnation does not always lead uphill; the human being is not guaranteed a human birth in his next life. For example, if one dies with the mentality of a dog, then he will in his next life receive the eyes, ears, nose, etc., of a dog, thus allowing him to enjoy canine pleasures. Lord Krishna confirms the fate of such an unfortunate soul, saying, "When one dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom." According to Bhagavad-gita, humans who do not inquire about their nonphysical, higher nature are compelled by the laws of karma to continue in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, sometimes appearing as humans, sometimes as animals, and sometimes as plants or insects.

Our existence in the material world is due to the multiple karmic reactions of this and previous lives, and the human body provides the only loophole through which the materially conditioned soul can escape. By properly utilizing the human form, one can solve all the problems of life (birth, death, disease, and old age) and break the endless cycle of reincarnation. If, however, a soul, having evolved to the human platform, wastes his life by engaging only in activities for sense pleasure, he can easily create sufficient karma in this present life to keep him entangled in the cycle of birth and death for thousands upon thousands of lives. And they may not all be human.

Lord Krishna says, "The foolish cannot understand how a living entity can quit his body, nor can they understand what sort of body he enjoys under the spell of the modes of nature. But one whose eyes are trained in knowledge can see all this. The endeavoring transcendentalists, who are situated in self-realization, can see all this clearly. But those whose minds are not developed and who are not situated in self-realization cannot see what is taking place, though they may try to."

A soul fortunate enough to obtain a human body should seriously endeavor for self-realization, to understand the principles of reincarnation and become free from repeated birth and death. We can't afford) not to.

Source:

"Coming Back: The Science of Reincarnation"
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

REINCARNATION IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY



Elisabeth Claire Prophet photo. Many Christians have the misconception that the concept of reincarnation holds that, at the time of death, people reincarnate immediately and do not have any experiences in the spirit realms in between Earth lives.

Near-death experiences prove this misconception to be untrue. Because time does not exist in the spirit world, a person can spend an "eternity" in the spirit realms, if they wish to do so, and have the freedom to decide if they want to reincarnate or not. The ultimate goal of reincarnation is to learn enough lessons from Earth lives that reincarnation is no longer necessary.

Does it make any difference whether or not one believes in reincarnation? The doctrine of reincarnation, like any dogmatic tenet, is not very important when it comes to living a spiritual life. It is probably equivalent to believing that so many angels can dance on the head of a pin. There is probably no special spiritual advance for a person to believe or not believe in reincarnation. Reincarnation only provides a reasonable theory to account for the apparent absurdities in the dispensation of divine justice.

Elisabeth Clare Prophet was a minister with The Summit Lighthouse and author of several books dealing with early Christianity and many related metaphysical books, such as: • Reincarnation: The Missing Link in Christianity • Fallen Angels and the Origins of Evil • Karma and Reincarnation • The Lost Teachings of Jesus • The Book of Enoch the Prophet • Quietly Comes the Buddha • The Path to the Universal Christ • Kabbalah: Key to Your Inner Power • Keys to the Kingdom • The Astrology of the Four Horsemen and • Walking with the Master.

Elisabeth Clare Prophet's meticulous and impressive research into the history of reincarnation in the early Christian movement provides the seeker of truth a valid reason to believe that the early Church officials decided to halt the long history of reincarnation in the early

Christian sects in order to further their own political purposes. The following information comes from my favorite book by Ms. Prophet, Reincarnation: The Missing Link in Christianity.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD IN HUMANITY

Early in the fourth century, while Bishop Alexander of Alexandria was expounding on the Trinity to his flock, a theological tsunami was born.

A Libyan priest named Arius stood up and posed the following simple question: "If the Father begat the Son, he that was begotten had a beginning of existence." In other words, if the Father is the parent of the Son, then didn't the Son have a beginning?



Presbyter Arius

Apparently, no one had put it this way before. For many bishops, Arius spoke heresy when he said that the Son had a beginning. A debate erupted, led by Arius on the one side and by Alexander and his deacon Athanasius on the other. Athanasius became the Church's lead fighter in a struggle that lasted his entire life.

In 320 A.D., Alexander held a Council of Alexandria to condemn the errors of Arius. But this did not stop the controversy. The Church had nearly split over the issue when the controversy reached the ears of the Roman emperor Constantine. He decided to resolve it himself in a move that permanently changed the course of Christianity.

The orthodox accused the Arians of attempting to lower the Son by saying he had a beginning. But, in fact, the Arians gave him an exalted position, honouring him as "first among creatures." Arius described the Son as one who became "perfect God, only begotten and unchangeable," but also argued that he had an origin.

The Arian controversy was really about the nature of humanity and how we are saved. It involved two pictures of Jesus Christ: Either he was a God who had always been God or he was a human who became God's Son.

If he was a human who became God's Son, then that implied that other humans could also become Sons of God. This idea was unacceptable to the orthodox, hence their insistence that Jesus had always been God and was entirely different from all created beings. As we shall see, the Church's theological position was, in part, dictated by its political needs. The Arian position had the potential to erode the authority of the Church since it implied that the soul did not need the Church to achieve salvation.

The outcome of the Arian controversy was crucial to the Church's position on both reincarnation and the soul's opportunity to become one with God. Earlier, the Church decided that the human soul is not now and never has been a part of God. Instead it belongs to the material world and is separated from God by a great chasm.

Rejecting the idea that the soul is immortal and spiritual, which was a part of Christian thought at the time of Clement of Alexandria and Origen, the Fathers developed the concept of "creatio ex nihilo", creation out of nothing. If the soul were not a part of God, the orthodox theologians reasoned, it could not have been created out of his essence.

The doctrine persists to this day. By denying man's divine origin and potential, the doctrine of creation out of nothing rules out both pre-existence and reincarnation. Once the Church adopted the doctrine, it was only a matter of time before it rejected both Origenism and Arianism.

In fact, the Arian controversy was only one salvo in the battle to eradicate the mystical tradition Origen represented.

Origen and his predecessor, Clement of Alexandria, lived in a Platonist world. For them it was a given that there is an invisible spiritual world which is permanent and a visible material world that is changeable. The soul belongs to the spiritual world, while the body belongs to the material world.

In the Platonists' view, the world and everything in it is not created but emanates from God, the One. Souls come from the Divine Mind, and even when they are encased in bodily form, they retain their link to the Source.

Clement tells us that humanity is "of celestial birth, being a plant of heavenly origin." Origen taught that man, having been made after the "image and likeness of God," has "a kind of blood-relationship with God."

While Clement and Origen were teaching in Alexandria, another group of Fathers was developing a counter-theology. They rejected the Greek concept of the soul in favor of a new and unheard of idea: The soul is not a part of the spiritual world at all; but, like the body, it is part of the mutable material world.

They based their theology on the changeability of the soul. How could the soul be divine and immortal, they asked, if it is capable of changing, falling and sinning? Because it is capable of change, they reasoned, it cannot be like God, who is unchangeable.

Origen took up the problem of the soul's changeability but came up with a different solution. He suggested that the soul was created immortal and that even though it fell (for which he suggests various reasons), it still has the power to restore itself to its original state.

For him the soul is poised between spirit and matter and can choose union with either: "The will of this soul is something intermediate between the flesh and the spirit, undoubtedly serving and obeying one of the two, whichever it has chosen to obey." If the soul chooses to join with spirit, Origen wrote, "the spirit will become one with it."

This new theology, which linked the soul with the body, led to the ruling out of pre-existence. If the soul is material and not spiritual, then it cannot have existed before the body. As Gregory of Nyssa wrote: "Neither does the soul exist before the



body, nor the body apart from the soul, but ... there is only a single origin for both of them."

When is the soul created then? The Fathers came up with an improbable answer: at the same time as the body - at conception. "God is daily making souls," wrote Church Father Jerome. If souls and bodies are created at the same time, both preexistence and reincarnation are out of the question since they imply that souls exist before bodies and can be attached to different bodies in succession.

The Church still teaches the soul is created at the same time as the body and therefore the soul and the body are a unit.

This kind of thinking led straight to the Arian controversy. Now that the Church had denied that the soul preexists the body and that it belongs to the spiritual world, it also denied that souls, bodies and the created world emanated from God.

THE ARIAN CONTROVERSY

When Arius asked whether the Son had a beginning, he was, in effect, pointing out a fundamental flaw in that doctrine. The doctrine did not clarify the nature of Christ. So he was asking: If there is an abyss between Creator and creation, where does Christ belong? Was he created out of nothing like the rest of the creatures? Or was he part of God? If so, then how and why did he take on human form?

The Church tells us that the Arian controversy was a struggle against blasphemers who said Christ was not God. But the crucial issue in the debate was: How is humanity saved - through emulating Jesus or through worshipping him?

The Arians claimed that Jesus became God's Son and thereby demonstrated a universal principle that all created beings can follow. But the Orthodox Church said that he had always been God's Son, was of the same essence as God (and therefore was God) and could not be imitated by mere creatures, who lack God's essence. Salvation could come only by accessing God's grace via the Church.

The Arians believed that human beings could also be adopted as Sons of God by imitating Christ. For the Arians, the incarnation of Christ was designed to show us that we can follow Jesus and become, as Paul said, "joint heirs with Christ."

The Orthodox Church, by creating a gulf between Jesus and the rest of us, denied that we could become Sons in the same way he did. The reason why the Church had such a hard time seeing Jesus' humanity was that they could not understand how anyone could be human and divine at the same time. Either Jesus was human (and therefore changeable) or he was divine (and therefore unchangeable).

The orthodox vision of Jesus as God is based in part on a misunderstanding of the Gospel of John. John tells us: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Later John tells us the "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The orthodox concluded from these passages that Jesus Christ is God, the Word, made flesh.

What they didn't understand was that when John called Jesus "the Word," he was referring to the Greek tradition of the Logos. When John tells us that the Word created everything, he uses the Greek term for Word - "Logos." In Greek thought, Logos describes the part of God that acts in the world. Philo called the Logos "God's Likeness, by whom the whole cosmos was fashioned." Origen called it the soul that holds the universe together.



Philo believed that great human beings like Moses could personify the Logos. Thus, when John writes that Jesus is the Logos, he does not mean that the man Jesus has always been God the Logos. What John is telling us is that Jesus the man became the Logos, the Christ.

Some early theologians believed that everyone has that opportunity. Clement tells us that each human has the "image of the Word (Logos)" within him and that it is for this reason that Genesis says that humanity is made "in the image and likeness of God."

The Logos, then, is the spark of divinity, the seed of Christ, that is within our hearts. Apparently the orthodox either rejected or ignored this concept. We should understand that Jesus became the Logos just as he became the Christ. But that didn't mean he was the only one who could ever do it. Jesus explained this mystery when he broke the bread at the Last Supper. He took a single loaf, symbolizing the one Logos, the one Christ, and broke it and said, "This is my body, which is broken for you."

He was teaching the disciples that there is one absolute God and one Universal Christ, or Logos, but that the body of that Universal Christ can be broken and each piece will still retain all the qualities of the whole. He was telling them that the seed of Christ was within them, that he had

come to quicken it and that the Christ was not diminished no matter how many times his body was broken. The smallest fragment of God, Logos, or Christ, contains the entire nature of Christ's divinity - which, to this day, he would make our own.

The orthodox misunderstood Jesus' teaching because they were unable to accept the reality that each human being has both a human and a divine nature and the potential to become wholly divine. They didn't understand the human and the divine in Jesus and therefore they could not understand the human and the divine within themselves. Having seen the weakness of human nature, they thought they had to deny the divine nature that occasionally flashes forth even in the lowliest of human beings.

The Church did not understand (or could not admit) that Jesus came to demonstrate the process by which the human nature is transformed into the divine. But Origen had found it easy to explain.

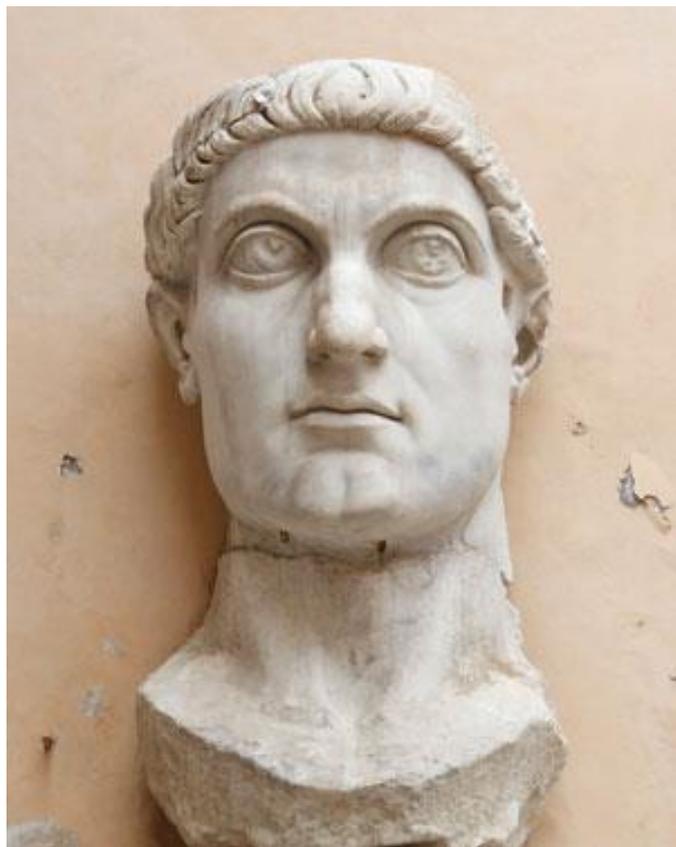
He believed that the human and divine natures can be woven together day by day. He tells us that in Jesus "the divine and human nature began to interpenetrate in such a way that the human nature, by its communion with the divine, would itself become divine." Origen tells us that the option for the transformation of humanity into divinity is available not just for Jesus but for "all who take up in faith the life which Jesus taught." Origen did not hesitate to describe the relationship of human beings to the Son. He believed that we contain the same essence as the Father and the Son: "We, therefore, having been made according to the image, have the Son, the original, as the truth of the noble qualities that are within us. And what we are to the Son, such is the Son to the Father, who is the truth." Since we have the noble qualities of the Son within us, we can undergo the process of divinization (at-one-ment with God).

To the Arians, the divinization process was essential to salvation; to the orthodox, it was heresy. In 324 A.D., the Roman emperor Constantine, who had embraced Christianity twelve years earlier, entered the Arian controversy. He wrote a letter to Arius and Bishop Alexander urging them to reconcile their differences, and he sent Bishop Hosius of Cordova to Alexandria to deliver it. But his letter could not calm the storm that raged over the

nature of God - and man. Constantine realized that he would have to do more if he wanted to resolve the impasse.

THE COUNCIL OF NICEA

In June, 325 A.D., the Council of Nicea opened and continued for two months, with Constantine attending. The bishops modified an existing creed to fit their purposes. The creed, with some changes made at a later fourth century council, is still given today in many churches. The Nicene Creed, as it came to be called, takes elaborate care by repeating several redundancies to identify the Son with the Father rather than with the creation:



Constantine the Great

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father. By whom all things were made ... Who ... was incarnate and was made human ..."

Only two bishops, along with Arius, refused to sign the creed. Constantine banished them from the empire, while the other bishops went on to celebrate their unity in a great feast at the imperial palace.

The creed is much more than an affirmation of Jesus' divinity. It is also an affirmation of our separation from God and Christ. It takes great pains to describe Jesus as God in order to deny that he is part of God's creation. He is "begotten, not made," therefore totally separate from us, the created beings. As scholar George Leonard Prestige writes, the Nicene Creed's description of Jesus tells us "that the Son of God bears no resemblance to the ... creatures."

The description of Jesus as the only Son of God is carried forward in the Apostles' Creed, which is used in many Protestant churches today. It reads: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty ... I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord." But even that language - calling Jesus God's only Son - denies that we can ever attain the sonship that Jesus did.

Christians may be interested to know that many scholars analyzing the Bible now believe that Jesus never claimed to be the only Son of God. This was a later development based on a misinterpretation of the gospel of John.

There is further evidence to suggest that Jesus believed all people could achieve the goal of becoming Sons of God. But the churches, by retaining these creeds, remain in bondage to Constantine and his three hundred bishops.

Some of the bishops who attended the council were uncomfortable with the council's definition of the Son and thought they might have gone too far. But the emperor, in a letter sent to the bishops who were not in attendance at Nicea, required that they accept "this truly divine injunction."

Constantine said that since the council's decision had been "determined in the holy assemblies of the bishops," the Church officials must regard it as "indicative of the divine will."

The Roman god Constantine had spoken. Clearly, he had concluded that the orthodox position was more conducive to a strong and unified Church than the Arian position and that it therefore must be upheld.

Constantine also took the opportunity to inaugurate the first systematic government persecution of dissident Christians. He issued an edict against "heretics," calling them "haters and enemies of truth and life, in league with destruction."

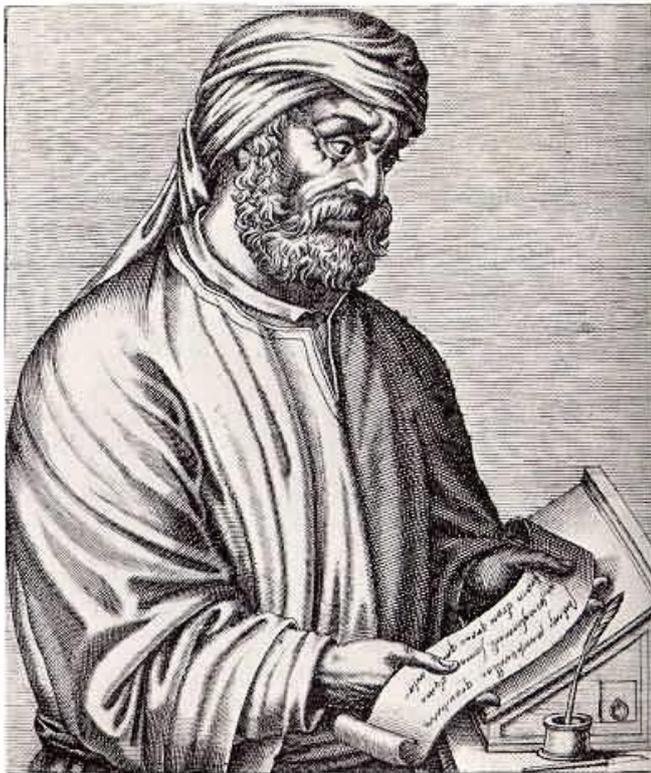
Even though he had begun his reign with an edict of religious toleration, he now forbade the

heretics (mostly Arians) to assemble in any public or private place, including private homes, and ordered that they be deprived of "every gathering point for [their] superstitious meetings," including "all the houses of prayer." These were to be given to the orthodox Church.

The heretical teachers were forced to flee, and many of their students were coerced back into the orthodox fold. The emperor also ordered a search for their books, which were to be confiscated and destroyed. Hiding the works of Arius carried a severe penalty - the death sentence.

Nicea, nevertheless, marked the beginning of the end of the concepts of both preexistence, reincarnation, and salvation through union with God in Christian doctrine. It took another two hundred years for the ideas to be expunged.

But Constantine had given the Church the tools with which to do it when he molded Christianity in his own image and made Jesus the only Son of God. From now on, the Church would become representative of a capricious and autocratic God - a God who was not unlike Constantine and other Roman emperors.



Tertullian, a 16th-century representation

Tertullian, a staunch anti-Origenian and a father of the Church, had this to say about those who believed in reincarnation and not the resurrection of the dead: "What a panorama of spectacle on that day [the Resurrection]! What sight should I turn to first to laugh and applaud?

... Wise philosophers, blushing before their students as they burn together, the followers to whom they taught that the world is no concern of God's, whom they assured that either they had no souls at all or that what souls they had would never return to their former bodies? These are things of greater delight, I believe, than a circus, both kinds of theater, and any stadium." Tertullian was a great influence in having so-called "heretics" put to death.

THE FIFTH GENERAL COUNCIL

After Constantine and Nicea, Origen's writings had continued to be popular among those seeking clarification about the nature of Christ, the destiny of the soul and the manner of the resurrection. Some of the more educated monks had taken Origen's ideas and were using them in mystical practices with the aim of becoming one with God.

Toward the end of the fourth century, orthodox theologians again began to attack Origen. Their chief areas of difficulty with Origen's thought were his teachings on the nature of God and Christ, the resurrection and the preexistence of the soul.

Their criticisms, which were often based on ignorance and an inadequate understanding, found an audience in high places and led to the Church's rejection of Origenism and reincarnation. The Church's need to appeal to the uneducated masses prevailed over Origen's coolheaded logic.

The bishop of Cyprus, Epiphanius, claimed that Origen denied the resurrection of the flesh. However, as scholar Jon Dechow has demonstrated, Epiphanius neither understood nor dealt with Origen's ideas. Nevertheless, he was able to convince the Church that Origen's ideas were incompatible with the merging literalist theology. On the basis of Epiphanius' writings, Origenism would be finally condemned a century and a half later.

Jerome believed that resurrection bodies would be flesh and blood, complete with genitals - which, however, would not be used in the hereafter. But Origenists believed the resurrection bodies would be spiritual.

The Origenist controversy spread to monasteries in the Egyptian desert, especially at Nitria, home to about five thousand monks. There were two kinds of monks in Egypt - the simple and

uneducated, who composed the majority, and the Origenists, an educated minority.

The controversy solidified around the question of whether God had a body that could be seen and touched. The simple monks believed that he did. But the Origenists thought that God was invisible and transcendent. The simple monks could not fathom Origen's mystical speculations on the nature of God.

In 399 A.D., Bishop Theophilus wrote a letter defending the Origenist position. At this, the simple monks flocked to Alexandria, rioting in the streets and even threatening to kill Theophilus.

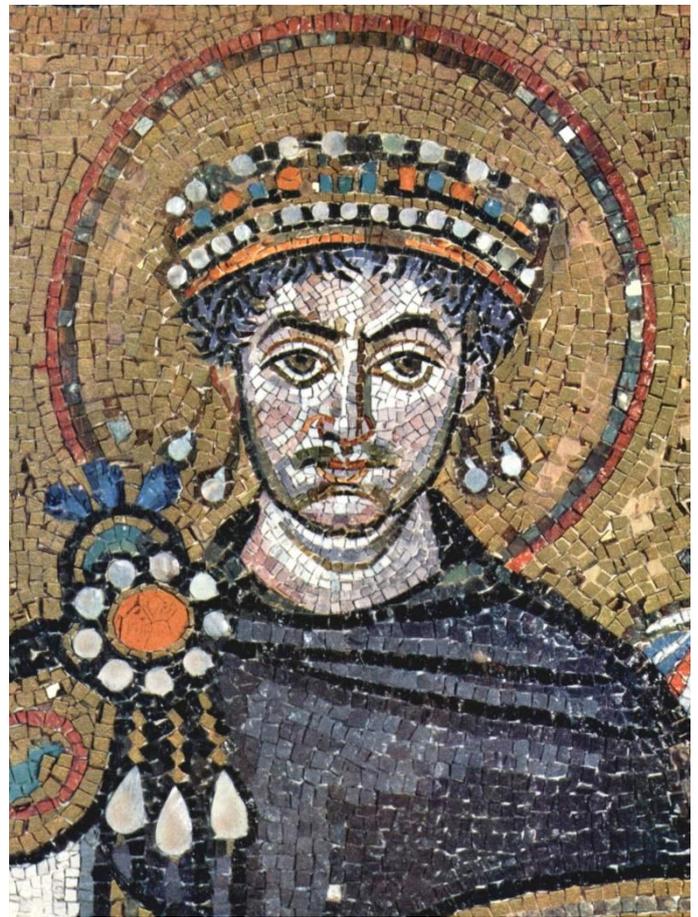
The bishop quickly reversed himself, telling the monks that he could now see that God did indeed have a body: "In seeing you, I behold the face of God." Theophilus' sudden switch was the catalyst for a series of events that led to the condemnation of Origen and the burning of the Nitrian monastery.

Under Theodosius, Christians, who had been persecuted for so many years, now became the persecutors. God made in man's image proved to be an intolerant one. The orthodox Christians practiced sanctions and violence against all heretics (including Gnostics and Origenists), pagans and Jews. In this climate, it became dangerous to profess the ideas of innate divinity and the pursuit of union with God.

It may have been during the reign of Theodosius that the Gnostic Nag Hammadi manuscripts were buried - perhaps by Origenist monks. For while the Origenist monks were not openly Gnostic, they would have been sympathetic to the Gnostic viewpoint and may have hidden the books after they became too hot to handle.

The Origenist monks of the desert did not accept Bishop Theophilus' condemnations. They continued to practice their beliefs in Palestine into the sixth century until a series of events drove Origenism underground for good.

Justinian (ruled 527-565 A.D.) was the most able emperor since Constantine - and the most active in meddling with Christian theology. Justinian issued edicts that he expected the Church to rubber-stamp, appointed bishops and even imprisoned the pope.



Justinian I

After the collapse of the Roman Empire at the end of the fifth century, Constantinople remained the capital of the Eastern, or Byzantine, Empire. The story of how Origenism ultimately came to be rejected involves the kind of labyrinthine power plays that the imperial court became famous for. Around 543 A.D., Justinian seems to have taken the side of the anti-Origenists since he issued an edict condemning ten principles of Origenism, including preexistence. It declared "anathema to Origen ... and to whomsoever there is who thinks thus." In other words, Origen and anyone who believes in these propositions would be eternally damned. A local council at Constantinople ratified the edict, which all bishops were required to sign.

In 553 A.D., Justinian convoked the Fifth General Council of the Church to discuss the controversy over the so-called "Three Chapters." These were writings of three theologians whose views bordered on the heretical. Justinian wanted the writings to be condemned and he expected the council to oblige him.

He had been trying to coerce the pope into agreeing with him since 545 A.D. He had essentially arrested the pope in Rome and brought him to Constantinople, where he held

him for four years. When the pope escaped and later refused to attend the council, Justinian went ahead and convened it without him.

This council produced fourteen new anathemas against the authors of the Three Chapters and other Christian theologians. The eleventh anathema included Origen's name in a list of heretics.

The first anathema reads: "If anyone asserts the fabulous preexistence of souls, and shall assert the monstrous restoration which follows from it: let him be anathema." ("Restoration" means the return of the soul to union with God. Origenists believed that this took place through a path of reincarnation.) It would seem that the death blow had been struck against Origenism and reincarnation in Christianity.

After the council, the Origenist monks were expelled from their Palestinian monastery, some bishops were deposed and once again Origen's writings were destroyed. The anti-Origenist monks had won. The emperor had come down firmly on their side.

In theory, it would seem that the missing papal approval of the anathemas leaves a doctrinal loophole for the belief in reincarnation among all Christians today. But since the Church accepted the anathemas in practice, the result of the council was to end belief in reincarnation in orthodox Christianity.

In any case, the argument is moot. Sooner or later the Church probably would have forbade the beliefs. When the Church codified its denial of the divine origin of the soul (at Nicea in 325 A.D.), it started a chain reaction that led directly to the curse on Origen.

Church councils notwithstanding, mystics in the Church continued to practice divinization. They followed Origen's ideas, still seeking union with God.

But the Christian mystics were continually dogged by charges of heresy. At the same time as the Church was rejecting reincarnation, it was accepting original sin, a doctrine that made it even more difficult for mystics to practice.

CONCLUSION

With the condemnation of Origen, so much that is implied in reincarnation was officially

stigmatized as heresy that the possibility of a direct confrontation with this belief was effectively removed from the church. In dismissing Origen from its midst, the church only indirectly addressed itself to the issue of reincarnation. The encounter with Origenism did, however, draw decisive lines in the matter of preexistence, the resurrection of the dead, and the relationship between body and soul. What an examination of Origen and the church does achieve, however, is to show where the reincarnationist will come into collision with the posture of orthodoxy. The extent to which he may wish to retreat from such a collision is of course a matter of personal conscience.

***"Who do people say
the Son of Man is?"
They replied,
"Some say John the Baptist;
others say Elijah;
and still others,
Jeremiah or one of the
prophets."***

- (Matthew 16:13-14)

With the Council of 553 A.D. one can just about close the book on this entire controversy within the church. There are merely two footnotes to be added to the story, emerging from church councils in 1274 and 1439 A.D. In the Council of Lyons, in 1274 A.D., it was stated that after death the soul goes promptly either to heaven or to hell. On the Day of Judgment, all will stand before the tribunal of Christ with their bodies to render account of what they have done. The Council of Florence of 1439 A.D. uses almost the same wording to describe the swift passage of the soul either to heaven or to hell. Implicit in both of these councils is the assumption that the soul does not again venture into physical bodies.

Source: <https://www.near-death.com/reincarnation/history/christian-history.html>

NETAJI SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE

Subhash Chandra Bose was one of the most celebrated freedom fighters of India. He was a charismatic influencer of the youth and earned the epithet 'Netaji' by establishing and leading the Indian National Army (INA) during India's struggle for independence. Although initially aligned with the Indian National Congress, he was ousted from the party due to his difference in ideology. He sought assistance from Nazi leadership in Germany and Imperial forces in Japan during the World War II, to overthrow the British from India. His sudden disappearance post 1945, led to surfacing of various theories, concerning the possibilities of his survival.



served several stints in prison for his nationalist activities during this time.

CHILDHOOD & EARLY LIFE

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was born on 23 January, 1897 in Cuttack (Orissa) to Janakinath Bose and Prabhavati Devi. Subhash was the ninth child among eight brothers and six sisters. His father, Janakinath Bose, was an affluent and successful lawyer in Cuttack and received the title of "Rai Bahadur". He later became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council.

During his stay in Berlin, he met and fell in love with Emily Schenk, who was of Austrian origin. Bose and Emily were married in 1937 in a secret Hindu ceremony and Emily gave birth to a daughter Anita in 1942. Shortly after the birth of their daughter, Bose left Germany in 1943 to come back to India.

Association with Indian National Congress

Initially, Subhash Chandra Bose worked under the leadership of Chittaranjan Das, an active member of the Congress in Calcutta. It was Chittaranjan Das, who along with Motilal Nehru, left Congress and founded the Swaraj Party in 1922. Bose regarded Chittaranjan Das as his political guru. He himself started the newspaper 'Swaraj', edited Das' newspaper 'Forward' and worked as the CEO of Calcutta Municipal Corporation under Das' stint as Mayor. Subhash Chandra Bose played an important role in enlightening the students, youths and labourers of Calcutta. In his fervent wait to see India as an independent, federal and republic nation, he emerged as a charismatic and firebrand youth icon. He was admired within the congress for his great ability in organization development. He

DISPUTE WITH THE CONGRESS

In 1928, during the Guwahati Session of the Congress, a difference of opinion surfaced between the old and new members of the Congress. The young leaders wanted a "complete self-rule and without any compromise" while the senior leaders were in favour of the "dominion status for India within the British rule".

The differences between moderate Gandhi and aggressive Subhash Chandra Bose swelled to irreconcilable proportions and Bose decided to resign from the party in 1939. He went on to form the Forward Bloc the same year.

Although he voiced his dislike for the British often in his correspondences, he also expressed his admiration for their structured way of life. He met with the leaders of the British Labor Party and political thinkers including Clement Attlee, Harold Laski, J.B.S. Haldane, Arthur Greenwood, G.D.H. Cole, and Sir Stafford Cripps and discussed the possibilities that an independent India might hold.

FORMATION OF THE INA

Bose vehemently opposed the Congress decision to support the British during the Second World War. With the aim to initiate a mass movement, Bose called out to Indians for their whole-hearted participation. There was tremendous response to his call "Give me blood and I will give you freedom" and the British promptly imprisoned him. In jail, he declared a hunger-strike. When his health deteriorated, the authorities, fearing violent reactions, released him but put him under house-arrest.

In January, 1941, Subhash made a planned escape and reached Berlin, Germany via a detour through Peshawar. Germans assured him their full support in his endeavours and he gained allegiance of Japan as well. He took a perilous journey back east and reached Japan where he assumed command over 40,000 soldiers recruited from Singapore and other south East Asian regions. He called his army the 'Indian National Army' (INA) and led the same to capture the Andaman and Nicobar islands from the British and rechristened it as Shaheed and Swaraj Islands. A provisional "Azad Hind Government" started functioning in the captured territories. The INA or the Azad Hind Fauj stared for India and crossed Burma Border, and stood on Indian soil on March 18, 1944. Unfortunately, the tide of the World War turned and the Japanese and German forces surrendered which forced him to call off further advancement.

DEATH

Netaji disappeared mysteriously soon after the retreat. It is said that he went back to Singapore and met Field Marshal Hisaichi Terauchi, head of all military operations in South East Asia who arranged for him a flight to Tokyo. He boarded a Mitsubishi Ki-21 heavy bomber from Saigon Airport on August 17, 1945. The following day the bomber crashed shortly after take-off after a night halt in Taiwan. Witnesses report that Bose sustained intense third degree burns in the process. He succumbed to his injuries on Aug 18, 1945. He was cremated on August 20 in Taihoku Crematorium and his ashes were laid to rest at the Renkoji Temple of Nichiren Buddhism in Tokyo.

Bose's comrades who were stranded in Saigon waiting to be transported never saw his body. Nor did they see any photographs of his injuries. They refused to believe that their hero was dead and hoped that he evaded detection by the British-American forces. They believed whole heartedly that it was just a matter of time that Netaji will gather up his army and conduct a march towards Delhi. Soon people began to report sighting of the hero and even Gandhi expressed his scepticism about death of Bose. Post-independence, people started to believe that Netaji had adopted an ascetic life and became a Sadhu. The mysteries

surrounding Bose's death took upon mythic proportions and perhaps symbolized the hope of the nation.

The government of India set up a number of committees to investigate the case. First the Figgess Report in 1946 and then the Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956, concluded that Bose had indeed died in the crash in Taiwan.

Later, the Khosla Commission (1970) concurred with the earlier reports, the reports of Justice Mukherjee Commission (2006) said, "Bose did not die in the plane crash and the ashes at Renkoji temple are not his". However, the findings were rejected by the Government of India.

In 2016, following the declassification of a report handed over by the Japanese government to the Indian Embassy in Tokyo in 1956, titled "Investigation on the cause of death and other matters of the late Subhash Chandra Bose" confirmed the Indian National Hero's death in Taiwan on August 18, 1945.

IDEOLOGY

Bose's correspondences prove his faith in democracy in Independent India. Bose's primary ideology was always the freedom of his motherland even if meant taking help from fascists like Mussolini or Hitler.

LEGACY

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose has left deep impact on the psyche of his countrymen. His slogan, 'Jai Hind' is still used in reverence to the country. The International airport in Kolkata has been named Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport to commemorate the charismatic leader.

IN POPULAR MEDIA

Many documentaries, TV series and films have been made on the life of netaji. In 2004, revered director Shyam Benegal made a biopic 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero' that received immense critical acclaim in India as well as in international film festivals.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEATH, KARMA AND REINCARNATION

By Anil Rajvanshi
Speakingtree.in



Death is the most certain thing for any living entity and yet we know so little about it. It may come early or later in life but the inevitable always happens. Yet we carry out our actions and behave as if we are immortal and death does not enter into our scheme of things. However if we understand death then we will really understand life and this will help us to live it fruitfully and happily.

In almost every society the spiritual writings are about the art of living which prepares human beings for death. Thus they contain intricate details of heaven and hell. Some religions also make the description of hell extremely frightening so that people will change their behavior to avoid it. Majority of spiritual writings are about how to live properly so that one can escape the cycle of birth and death. In all these writings the underlying philosophy is of the continuity of soul.

Thus Egyptians believed that eventually resurrection will take place and so elaborate mummification ritual for treating the dead body was developed. Similar has been the case in other religions.

In Indian Yogic tradition transition of soul from body to body is like changing into new clothes.

It goes through all the living species and evolves towards godhead after its karmas (Sanskrit for actions/deeds) are resolved through various births. Katha Upanishad, Patanjali Yoga Darshan and Brahma Sutra do talk briefly about the rebirth of soul in human form and how it can also be transformed into various species [43]. Patanjali Yoga says, “The transformation of one species into another is caused by inflowing of nature. Good or bad deeds are not the direct cause of this transformation but only act as a breaker of the obstacles to natural evolution – just as a farmer breaks down the obstacles in a water course so that water flows by its own nature” [44]. Hence the transfer of soul from one species to another seems to be an accepted thesis in Indian religion. A direct evidence of continuity of soul has come from people who had near death experiences (NDE) [45]. NDE seems to happen when a person is declared clinically dead but after some time returns to life. Interestingly enough nearly all the descriptions of NDE are very similar and talk of getting out of the body and going through a dark tunnel and then coming into brilliant white light. Depending upon the religion of the person he or she sees Christ, Krishna, Buddha or any chosen deity. For agnostics or atheists there is a feeling of tremendous warmth and happiness in the presence of white light.

Quite a number of people have also reported that during NDE their whole life flashes by and almost all their past actions become visible. Probably it is because the memory of their present birth is still fresh. Then somehow the self is told that his/her time to die has still not come and the person “wakes up” in the body, which is being resuscitated. Interestingly enough during this period there is no concept of time. In majority of cases tremendous change in attitude towards life and death takes place in people who experience NDE. They consider dying as a pleasurable experience and are not afraid of death anymore. One of the most detailed treatises on death and dying is the Tibetan book of Living and Dying [46]. Most of the material in this book is based on Indian Yogic system though Tibetan Buddhists give some terms Chinese sounding names. In this book a good description is given of what happens

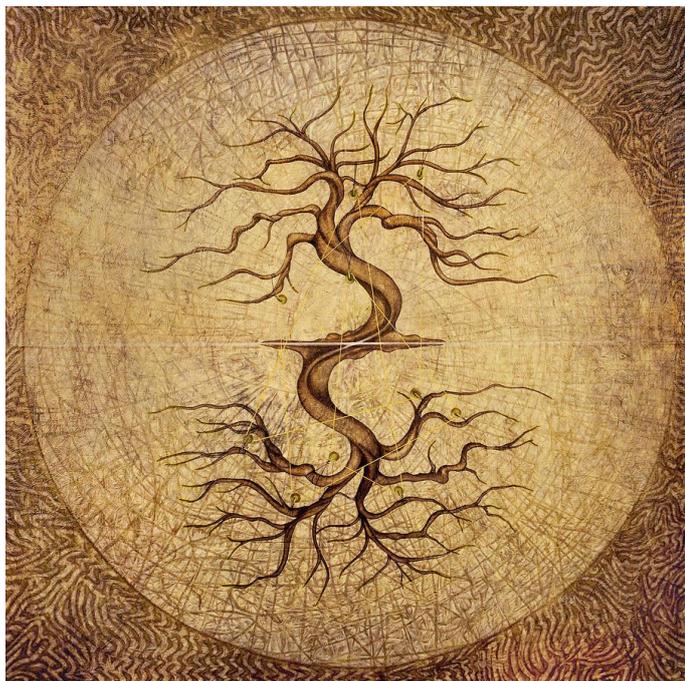
to the soul after death and till it gets a new body. Tibetan Buddhist Lamas call this transition state as Bardo (Tibetan word for transition). They identify the bardos as:

1. *Natural bardo of life. This extends to a person's lifetime.*

2. *Painful bardo of dying. This is the period, which lasts from the beginning of process of dying until the clinical death.*

3. *Luminous bardo of dharmata is the period after the death experience and is manifested by varied colors, sounds and light. This is similar to NDE.*

4. *Karmic bardo is the time interval, which lasts till the soul gets a new body. The Buddhists' believe in the Indian philosophical system that getting a new body is dependent on the karma (Sanskrit for action) of previous births. Similar beliefs exist in other religions. Hence one's actions or karma in this life seem to play a significant role in how one dies and in what form they are reborn.*



“As above, so below. As within, so with out.”

KARMA AND FEAR OF DEATH

Karma is a Sanskrit word meaning action. However it embraces the whole meaning of living. Thus according to law of karma your actions or deeds (both good and bad) decide your future in this life or the next life. Law of karma occupies a central position in Indian philosophy.

There are tomes written on it but here we will focus mostly on how it relates to death.

According to some commentators the law of karma is very deterministic. They claim that you are born according to your karma and things happen to you in your present birth because of your past karmas etc. Hence one cannot change the present life. This however negates the whole basis of Yoga which claims that one can change the Sanskars (memories) and hence ones life [47]. Each one of us is born with a unique genetic makeup, which provides a basic template for our general behavior. This behavior is further modified by the surroundings that one encounters in life. I therefore believe that each one of us has the power to change our destiny and our memories by our actions in this life. Our actions change the neural pathways in the brain and hence the mind which guides us to our future course of action. Thus individually we have a free will to create our own destiny but collectively we all maybe guided towards mankind's evolution.

As we saw in Chapter 1, each one of us can be thought of as an individual molecule moving “randomly” in the sea of humanity and according to the forces of opportunity acting on us. But all of us together may produce a “dissipative structure” which is the evolution of mankind. Thus the evolution of mankind towards a greater spiritual and technological sophistication is quite certain and therefore deterministic.

Also according to Indian Yogic system the time of death is governed by the karma of a living entity. When the karma's course is finished then death takes place. It is not clear how one can find out what constitutes karma, its duration or how many karmas a person accumulates during his/her lifetime. Patanjali Yoga Darshan simply states that Sanyam on his/her karma makes it possible for the Yogi to calculate the exact time of his death [48]. This also suggests that a Yogi has no control over his death though he may know the time of exit. However there are many instances of great Yogis who have left their body by their own will and hence can certainly select the time of their departure [31, 36].

An interesting aspect of time of death was given by the great Indian mathematician S. Ramanujam who used to say that the death of a person takes place only at a certain space-time junction point. He never explained what that junction point was. Ramanujam who died in 1920 at the young age of

32 was one of the greatest mathematicians of the last century. He was basically a spiritualist and mathematics was a by-product of his spirituality. He said many times “an equation to me has no meaning unless it expresses a thought of God” [49]. He had some powers which made him clairvoyant and hence could predict events. He even predicted that he would die before the age of 35. Quite a number of his friends and relatives used to come to him for consultation about their future and quite a number of times he urged them to move away from their present living place so that the space-time junction point could be avoided.

Though all the living entities are afraid of death, the desire to know how and when death will take place is very strong in human beings. The first impulse on sensing impending danger is to protect oneself and survival is the cornerstone of Darwinian evolutionary theory for all living entities. The possible reasons for death fear could be:

1.The experience is very traumatic. It is accompanied by loss of identity and sometimes with tremendous physical pain.

2.The living being does not know “instinctively” what will happen to its “memory” or form. For example whether it will find a new body or will it be fixed in space for a long time. So there is a fear of unknown. All living entities are wired in such a way that they are afraid of losing their body and with it their form and identity. If a soul can exist without a body then we should not be afraid of death. However the form or body, which gives us the sense of ‘I’, is very afraid of losing its identity.

3.The process of learning or moving to a higher level of consciousness is disturbed and delayed. For example 20-30 years or even more can be lost in the process.

4.The living entity loses its ability to change “memory”. This ability comes with the brain attached to the body and with death the body ceases to exist. As we saw in Chapter 4 the proliferation of species in the initial stages of evolution is a direct consequence of the desire of space “G” to have and keep a body. It allows the templates of memory from that species to continue.

BLOCKING THE PAIN OF DEATH

Since the soul clings to the body, the shedding of lifetime memories at the time of death is painful. That is the reason the Indian Yogic system stresses the liberation of soul so that the painful cycle of birth and death is stopped.

Yogis also believe that reduction or elimination of pain during death would remove its fear. One of the major aims of Yoga therefore is to make the body and mind powerful enough so that pain is either reduced or removed completely.

Why there is pain and what is its purpose? Pain and pleasure are complimentary and are part of life. They are the attributes of the body. The intense physical pain is probably an outcome of the body trying to repair itself and requires very intense brain concentration for it. All other sensory inputs or other thoughts are blocked by the pain sensation. This concentrated thought might help the brain to heal the body. This is also the mechanism where single-pointed concentration helps in memory removal. Pain therefore could be one of the key mechanisms for removing or modifying memory. Any intense experience can do the same. For example intense pleasure of love for a chosen deity is the genesis of Bhakti Yoga (Yoga of devotion) [41].

Interestingly, emotional and physical pains and their intensity are similar in nature and the brain does not differentiate between the two. Recent studies have revealed that fMRI scans of the subjects showed that the pain of rejection (emotional pain) and stubbing of big toe (physical pain) illuminated the same part of the brain [50]. We also show this similarity intuitively in our vocabulary with terms like broken heart, heartache etc. Emotional pain allows the brain to intensely focus on resolving the conflicts and at the same time helps it to send and receive thought packets.

Advanced Yogis claim to have developed a mechanism of blocking pain from reaching the brain through so called Kundalini Yoga. Kundalini is a very ancient Indian Yoga system, whose practitioners believe that there is energy (could be cerebrospinal fluid) which is coiled like a female serpent (Kundalini is the Sanskrit word for a coiled female serpent) and lies at the base of spinal chord [51]. However there is no physical evidence of this mechanism and process. Nevertheless yogis believe that by yogic process (mostly by imagining and willing it) it can be

raised in the central canal of the spinal chord to reach its ultimate destination - the brain. They also claim that once Kundalini reaches the brain, liberation of a yogi from the cycle of birth and death takes place. Raising it is done step by step and it takes many years of practice before Yogis can raise it up to the brain. Yogis also claim that conservation of sexual energy tremendously helps in this process.

Kundalini Yoga supposedly helps to remove the sense organ inputs to the brain from various parts of the body. In medicine the pain blockers do the same. The main pain sensations from the body come through the spinal chord and probably raising of Kundalini means blocking the pain centers in the spinal chord progressively starting from the base of the spine and reaching to the top of the brain. This effectively detaches the mind from sense organs. Shri Ramakrishna used to say that as he started raising his Kundalini, his body went through the process of locking itself starting from the base of his spinal chord so that he lost control of these parts as the Kundalini traveled from the base of the spine to the head [52].

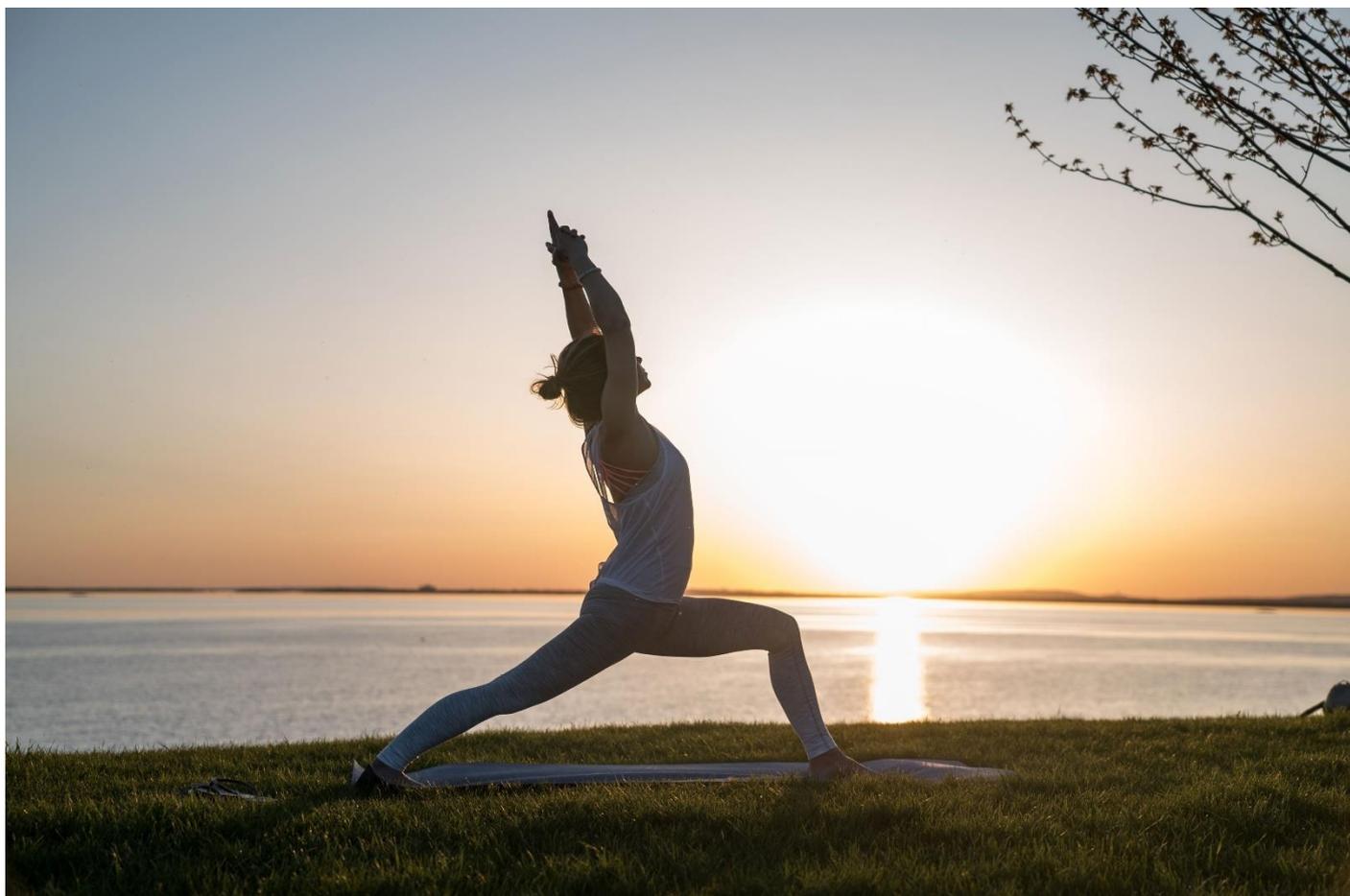
Yogis believe that with practice of Kundalini Yoga the mind gets completely detached from the body. This helps in developing memory or neural

pathways so that at the time of death it is quite easy for the memory or soul to leave the body painlessly. Besides, they believe that with “pure soul” (without the sense organ memories attached to it) it is possible to achieve salvation from the cycle of birth and death. This is the central theme of Indian Yogic system. Patanjali says that once the gunas (result of karma) are resolved through Yoga then the soul becomes pure (without memory) and merges into Universal Consciousness [53].

DEATH AND MEMORY REMOVAL

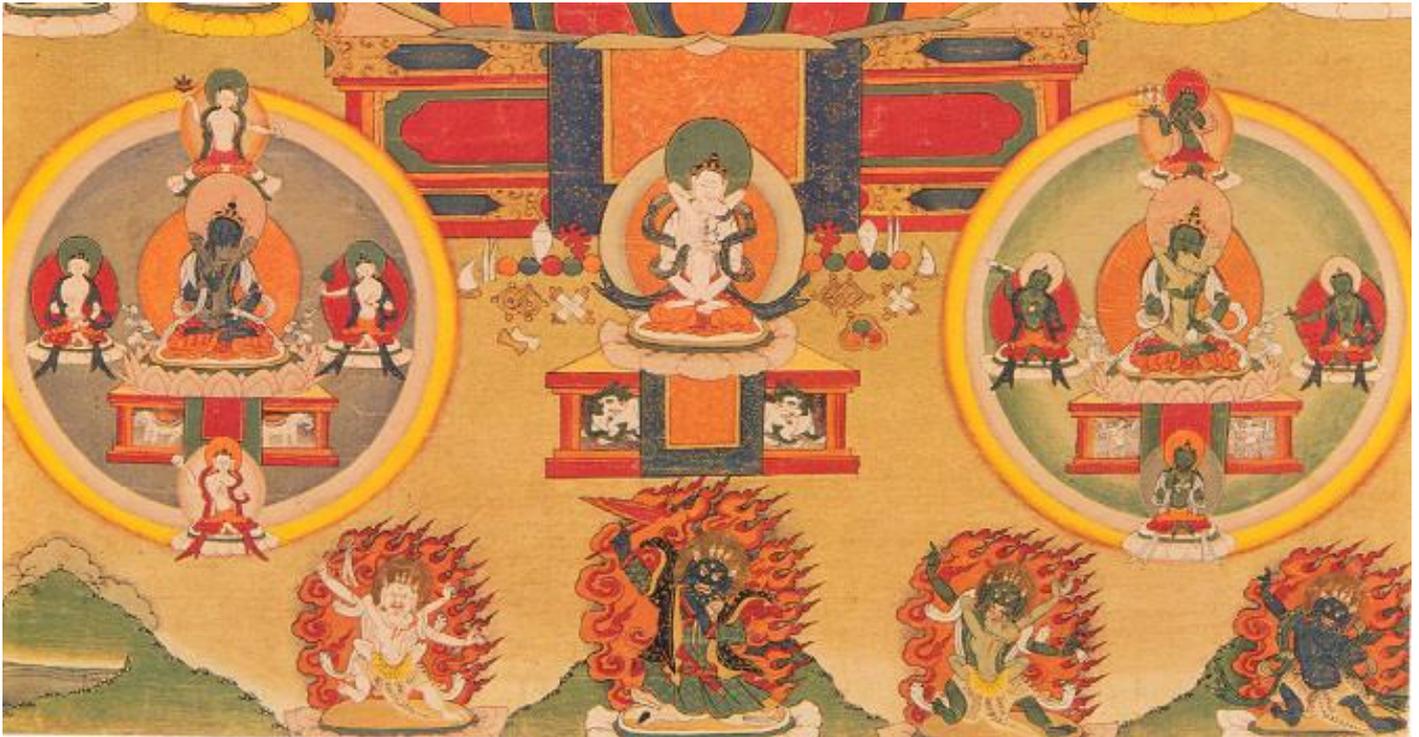
At the time of death it seems the ego sense ‘I’ or sense of identity has to shed the memory of attachments of sense organs. It is through the sense organs that we perceive the world and carry out our actions; hence it is these organs which give the sense of identity to a living entity. As we have seen earlier shedding of these attachments allows the removal of lifetime memories and hence is painful. Thus almost all memories are shed except the “basic memory” which is then transferred. We do not know what that basic memory could be.

An analogy from modern computers will be useful in explaining this memory transfer. At the



time of death there is a transfer of software (basic memory) from the body. In a computer a person transfers the software onto a new machine. In transfer of soul it is done on its own. There is no agent of transfer and hence it is guided by the forces it encounters just after death. Just like software is useless without the machine similarly the soul cannot do anything without the body (hardware). Body allows the soul (memory) to change its character just like one can modify the software through a computer machine. It is only through the body that the brain receives all the

sensory inputs and the body acts like an antenna for the mind. Hence the strongest desire of the soul is to get a body. This could be any body and thus the possibility of its transfer among species. Death is the most traumatic experience for a living entity and allows all the brain neurons to fire in a laser like fashion. This very concentrated thought just before the final exit allows the memory or soul to be transferred to the higher dimensional space. We have shown in Chapter 2 that this space is rigid and hence could be the realm of spirits and ghosts. Thus it is quite



Tibetan path of three bardos

possible that all souls immediately after death may remain in suspended animation till they get a new body. However one is not sure if the memory transfer takes place between all life forms or is it governed by a certain brain size. Thus there could be a cutoff brain size below which the transformation from humans to other life forms may not take place.

The chances of ghost formation are much more in sudden death conditions. For example people who die suddenly because of a heart attack, accidents, murders etc. may not get enough time for the sense organ detachment. Thus the souls of such persons may retain the memory of body form for a little longer time which may result in the ghost form. We still do not know for how long the “ghost structure” can remain and what type of energy is required to maintain its stability. Those who die of natural causes get sufficient time for

mind withdrawal or sense detachment of the soul and may follow the Tibetan path of three bardos. The spirits and ghosts being in higher dimensional space might have the powers to affect life in our space. Such instances of spirits and ghosts affecting life have been documented and recorded in all civilizations. Even Patanjali alludes to these beings which reside in “higher places”. [53(a)] However the “memory” of Yogis and enlightened souls guided by their willpower and powerful minds, could transcend the realms of spirits and ghosts and can go into even higher dimensional space.

REINCARNATION AND PASSAGE OF MEMORY

There are people who do not believe in life after death or reincarnation and think that after death everything finishes with the body. However there

is a strong proof from a large number of cases where there has been a total recall of past lives and events by individuals (especially children) and these cases have been reported in all societies and in almost all religions⁵⁶. Hence we will take the data of these cases as experiential fact and assume that there is reincarnation and life after death.

There have been many instances when rebirths have taken place in the same or nearby households brought about by a very strong will of the loved ones. The intense love creates a powerful force for the soul to be so reborn. However it is not known when and where the rebirth will take place. In a celebrated case the Indian saint Shri Ramakrishna described in detail how he and a very highly evolved Yogi decided to be born together on earth. He identified that Yogi as Swami Vivekananda, a great spiritual

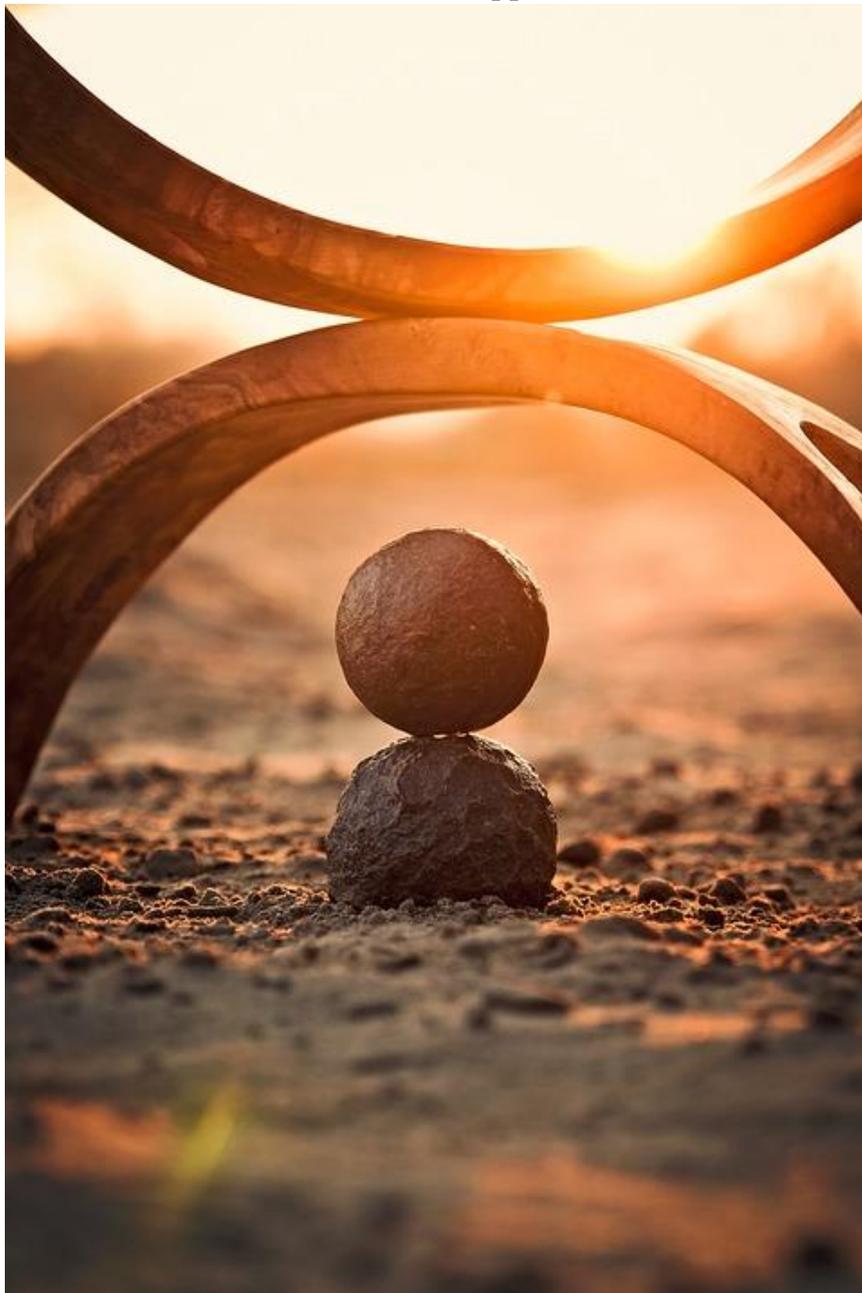
leader of India. However it took 20 years for Shri Ramakrishna to find out about Vivekananda although he was born within 20 km of where Ramakrishna was staying! Besides Vivekananda was born 40 years after Ramakrishna and the two met each other by chance in Calcutta [57]. Since time immemorial human beings have been curious regarding what happens to all our actions, ideas, memories etc. after our death.

There have been discussions on it in Upanishads and Mahabharata but most of them skirt the subject by stressing that one should lead a moral and upright life so that death is welcomed as a friend rather than an enemy [43]. We will however explore this subject in the light of what we have discussed in previous chapters. Hence it is possible that after death the following may happen to all the memories and information that

a person learns during his/her lifetime:

1. Information generation is an evolutionary process. Any profound or deep knowledge produced goes in the knowledge space (KS) and it continues to increase. It is never reduced. Also all our powerful emotions and information, whether good or bad, goes into the KS. This space is filled with such knowledge from all over the Universe. Thus the old saying that all our actions may come to haunt us may mean that the information is never lost.

2. The soul passing from one body to another carries the basic memory only. We are not sure presently what this memory is and what is its structure. However it could be the user name and the password just like in the Internet where these two pieces of information allows one to access all the information from the cyberspace! Once it gets into a new body and as the brain reaches full



formation, then it can access the emotional information of its past births from KS. This is the genesis of reincarnation.

3. The basic memory transfer makes more sense energy-wise since it will be difficult for the transfer of soul from one body to another if large amount of memory is attached to it. Besides one of the aspects of getting a new body is that the memories of old body are removed and the "life" starts with a clean slate. Otherwise the burden of past memories can make living quite a chore since the heavy baggage of these memories will not allow the new experiences to be gained easily. Nevertheless the memories in KS effect a person's actions indirectly and thus all our past actions can come to haunt us.

4. Probably these memories in KS are the gunas that Patanjali talks about⁵³. They can be modified or removed through Yoga. With the removal of gunas their effect on an individual vanishes and liberation takes place.

5. It is possible that the memory of past births maybe accessed during dreaming process. During the early years of our life (between 6-10 years) our brains are fully developed but the ego sense 'I' is nascent and still developing. Thus it is possible that during dreaming when our nascent 'I' is weak and nearly absent the memories of past life can be accessed from the KS. This is akin to prophetic dream process which has been the basis of great visions and discoveries throughout the history of mankind (Chapter 9). This ability to access our past lives however gets diminished as we grow older since the 'I' becomes stronger with addition of new experiences and memories.

6. The KS is of two types. The first that stays with earth or other livable planet. This includes the books, memories, other materials and the "atmosphere" (both spiritual and otherwise) of earth or planet. This KS moves with the earth and earthlings can dip into it to get the knowledge so that the evolution of mankind takes place. The other KS is in the Universe and as the earth passes through it we can access it and produce quantum jumps in our knowledge. The knowledge in this KS exists because of actions of civilizations more advanced than ours.

One of the major aims of all life forms is to get a body – preferably a human one. Getting it is important in evolution of knowledge since a big human brain allows us to tune into the knowledge space (KS). Bodies belonging to other species cannot do so because of their small brain size. Hence if the soul goes into other life forms then the overall knowledge accumulation slows down and memories of past births cannot be changed or erased.

In order to avoid memory transfer after death into other species we need to cultivate our minds in such a manner that at the time of death we have a powerful structure of our thought so that most of the extraneous memories are shed and we create a great "Spiritual mass". Practice of yoga helps us in doing this. Creation of "Spiritual mass" is the only way to make sure that the transition of memory from one body to another human body is smooth and that it can also go to other planets by will. Passage of soul to other planets has been discussed in Chapter 1. It is possible that our ancient spiritual teachings about swarglok (heaven), etc. came because this planet was not a very comfortable or hospitable place and hence the focus was to release the soul so that it could go to other hospitable planets from where we might have originally come from.

As our technology advances we will be able to make our future world a very hospitable place so that the body could be made strong and healthy through Yoga or designer drugs. This will help to keep the mind and brain fit so that we could leave the body at will. Thus in future most souls may be able to produce a high "Spiritual mass" at the time of their death so that they could either stay here on earth by will or could go out of the Earth's gravitational field. Some Yogis claim that there are great masters who came from other worlds, have chosen to live in this world for its upliftment, and are hundred of years old [54].

The "Spiritual mass" can be produced when the brain is working at its fullest and capable of producing deep thought in higher dimensional space. This is what great Yogis can do and is the basis of whole Yoga. As we age our brain loses its suppleness and gets petrified. Hence it cannot fire all the 100 billion neurons in a laser like fashion at the time of death. This limits most people's capability to get a new body by will. Some of the great spiritual leaders like Christ, Adi Shankar acharya, Sant Gyaneshwar of

Maharashtra, Swami Vivekananda etc. left their bodies before they reached 40 years of age and when their brainpower was at its prime.⁵⁵ For others who cannot produce the critical “spiritual mass”, rebirth is by chance or strongly willed by their loved ones.

BASIS OF A GOOD LIFE

How does one lead his/her life so that it is happy and death is painless and is welcomed more like a friend when it comes? Tomes have been written on this subject and the great masters of this world like Christ, Buddha, Patanjali and others have spoken about it from their direct experiences. It will be therefore arrogant on my part to say anything more than what they have already said. However we can try to understand it from the perspective of our theory on deep thought.

The whole basis of life is to have continuous happiness and joy and that is possible with a very healthy body in a very hospitable world. The self can only enjoy and be happy with a body (preferably a human body) since it provides an anchor to it and allows the making and breaking of memories.

One of the keys to happiness is reduction and complete removal of greed. Greed creates tremendous conflicts and all round unhappiness. Removal of greed can be achieved by cultivating a nimble brain via Sanyam. A healthy body can help in creating a nimble brain. The nimble brain has a tremendous processing power and hence a small amount of data is processed very efficiently to gain useful information. This helps the mind to “get satisfied” easily and helps in satiating the desire so that the person can move on. This is the major step in greed reduction.

Sanyam also allows enough working memory space in the brain so that majority of 100 billion neurons are available to focus on a single thought. This becomes possible only when we have less memory locked up in the brain about mundane and routine worldly activities and attachments. Also there should be an excellent conflict resolution mechanism developed internally. Deep down we should honestly evaluate our actions and should be able to live with them in peace. This act can help in freeing

the mind from psychological knots, which can take up a major portion of the memory. Removal of these knots may help make the mind calm and fit for deep thought. The final word on this subject therefore belongs to Patanjali who says, “Undisturbed calmness of mind is attained by cultivating friendliness towards the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous and indifference towards the wicked” [58].

Making this world a better and more hospitable place can also help in calmness of mind and internal happiness. This will help us fulfill both our physical and emotional needs and can help all humans to live a very full and happy life. For most of us this planet is the only home we have. This means that besides our personal evolution we should also contribute as much as possible to mankind’s evolution. In this, technology will play a very major role. It allows us to take care of our physical needs and with its progress and evolution will allow us to live in a sustainable manner. Thus to my mind the contribution of Edisons, Fords, Einsteins and Newtons of this world towards mankind's evolution is at par with that of spiritual leaders like Buddha, Christ, Patanjali, etc.

Mankind has always aspired to immortality. Thus by means of chemicals, drugs and spiritual methods humans have always strived to prolong their lives. Yogis and practitioners of healthy body cult claim that human body can theoretically live for 125 years. There are some Yogis in India who claim that some masters have lived even for 300-400 years!⁵⁴ I believe that once our technology becomes very advanced then it will be possible for humans to have a long life. Whether that long life will be productive, happy and emotionally satisfying will depend a lot on how hospitable we make this planet earth. I believe a combination of spirituality and technology can provide a basis for achieving this goal (Chapter 19).

Source:

<https://www.speakingtree.in/blog/relationship-between-death-karma-and-reincarnation>

THE TEN GOLDEN RULES ON LIVING THE GOOD LIFE

By Panos Mourdoukoutas



Water Lillies
Image via Wikipedia

What is good life? What is happiness? What is success? What is pleasure? How should I treat other people? How should I cope with unfortunate events? How can I get rid off unnecessary worry? How should I handle liberty? The answers to all these questions are condensed in a little book, *The Ten Golden Rules* I co-authored with Michael Soupios:

1. Examine life, engage life with vengeance; always search for new pleasures and new destinies to reach with your mind. This rule isn't new. It echoes the verses of ancient Greek philosophers and most notably those of Plato through the voice of his hero, Socrates. Living life is about examining life through reason, nature's greatest gift to humanity. The importance of reason in sensing and examining life is evident in all phases of life-- from the infant who strains to explore its new surroundings to the grandparent who actively reads and assesses the headlines of the daily paper. Reason lets human beings participate in life, to be human is to think,

appraise, and explore the world, discovering new sources of material and spiritual pleasure.

2. Worry only about the things that are in your control, the things that can be influenced and changed by your actions, not about the things that are beyond your capacity to direct or alter. This rule summarizes several important features of ancient Stoic wisdom — features that remain powerfully suggestive for modern times. Most notably the belief in an ultimately rational order operating in the universe reflecting a benign providence that ensures proper outcomes in life. Thinkers such as Epictetus did not simply prescribe “faith” as an abstract philosophical principle; they offered a concrete strategy based on intellectual and spiritual discipline. The key to resisting the hardship and discord that intrude upon every human life, is to cultivate a certain attitude toward adversity based on the critical distinction between those things we are able to control versus those which are beyond our capacity to manage. The misguided investor may not be able to recover his fortune but he can resist the tendency to engage in self-torment. The victims of a natural disaster, a major illness or an accident may not be able to recover and live their lives the way they used to, but they too can save themselves the self-torment. In other words, while we cannot control all of the outcomes we seek in life, we certainly can control our responses to these outcomes and herein lies our potential for a life that is both happy and fulfilled.

3. Treasure Friendship, the reciprocal attachment that fills the need for affiliation. Friendship cannot be acquired in the market place, but must be nurtured and treasured in relations imbued with trust and amity. According to Greek philosophy, one of the defining characteristics of humanity that distinguishes it from other forms of existence is a deeply engrained social instinct, the need for association and affiliation with others, a need for friendship. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle viewed the formation of society as a reflection of the profound need for human affiliation rather than simply a contractual arrangement between otherwise detached individuals. Gods and animals do not have this kind of need but for humans it is an indispensable aspect of the life worth living because one cannot speak of a completed human identity, or of true

happiness, without the associative bonds called “friendship.” No amount of wealth, status, or power can adequately compensate for a life devoid of genuine friends.

4. Experience True Pleasure. Avoid shallow and transient pleasures. Keep your life simple. Seek calming pleasures that contribute to peace of mind. True pleasure is disciplined and restrained. In its many shapes and forms, pleasure is what every human being is after. It is the chief good of life. Yet not all pleasures are alike. Some pleasures are kinetic—shallow, and transient, fading way as soon as the act that creates the pleasure ends. Often they are succeeded by a feeling of emptiness and psychological pain and suffering. Other pleasures are catatematic—deep, and prolonged, and continue even after the act that creates them ends; and it is these pleasures that secure the well-lived life. That’s the message of the Epicurean philosophers that have been maligned and misunderstood for centuries, particularly in the modern era where their theories of the good life have been confused with doctrines advocating gross hedonism.

5. Master Yourself. Resist any external force that might delimit thought and action; stop deceiving yourself, believing only what is personally useful and convenient; complete liberty necessitates a struggle within, a battle to subdue negative psychological and spiritual forces that preclude a healthy existence; self mastery requires ruthless cadour. One of the more concrete ties between ancient and modern times is the idea that personal freedom is a highly desirable state and one of life’s great blessings. Today, freedom tends to be associated, above all, with political liberty. Therefore, freedom is often perceived as a reward for political struggle, measured in terms of one’s ability to exercise individual “rights.”

The ancients argued long before Sigmund Freud and the advent of modern psychology that the acquisition of genuine freedom involved a dual battle. First, a battle without, against any external force that might delimit thought and action. Second, a battle within, a struggle to subdue psychological and spiritual forces that preclude a healthy self-reliance. The ancient wisdom clearly recognized that humankind has an infinite capacity for self-deception, to believe what is personally useful and convenient at the expense of truth and reality, all with catastrophic consequences. Individual investors often deceive

themselves by holding on to shady stocks, believing what they want to believe. They often end up blaming stock analysts and stockbrokers when the truth of the matter is they are the ones who eventually made the decision to buy them in the first place. Students also deceive themselves believing that they can pass a course without studying, and end up blaming their professors for their eventual failure. Patients also deceive themselves that they can be cured with convenient “alternative medicines,” which do not involve the restrictive lifestyle of conventional methods.

6. Avoid Excess. Live life in harmony and balance. Avoid excesses. Even good things, pursued or attained without moderation, can become a source of misery and suffering. This rule is echoed in the writings of ancient Greek thinkers who viewed moderation as nothing less than a solution to life’s riddle. The idea of avoiding the many opportunities for excess was a prime ingredient in a life properly lived, as summarized in Solon’s prescription “Nothing in Excess” (6th Century B.C.). The Greeks fully grasped the high costs of passionate excess. They correctly understood that when people violate the limits of a reasonable mean, they pay penalties ranging from countervailing frustrations to utter catastrophe. It is for this reason that they prized ideals such as measure, balance, harmony, and proportion as much as they did, the parameters within which productive living can proceed. If, however, excess is allowed to destroy harmony and balance, then the life worth living becomes impossible to obtain.

7. Be a Responsible Human Being. Approach yourself with honesty and thoroughness; maintain a kind of spiritual hygiene; stop the blame-shifting for your errors and shortcomings. Be honest with yourself and be prepared to assume responsibility and accept consequences. This rule comes from Pythagoras, the famous mathematician and mystic, and has special relevance for all of us because of the common human tendency to reject responsibility for wrongdoing. Very few individuals are willing to hold themselves accountable for the errors and mishaps that inevitably occur in life. Instead, they tend to foist these situations off on others complaining of circumstances “beyond their control.” There are, of course, situations that occasionally sweep us along, against which we

have little or no recourse. But the far more typical tendency is to find ourselves in dilemmas of our own creation — dilemmas for which we refuse to be held accountable. How many times does the average person say something like, “It really wasn’t my fault. If only John or Mary had acted differently then I would not have responded as I did.” Cop-outs like these are the standard reaction for most people. They reflect an infinite human capacity for rationalization, finger-pointing, and denial of responsibility. Unfortunately, this penchant for excuses and self-exemption has negative consequences. People who feed themselves a steady diet of exonerating fiction are in danger of living life in bad faith — more, they risk corrupting their very essence as a human being.

8. Don’t Be a Prosperous Fool. Prosperity by itself, is not a cure-all against an ill-led life, and may be a source of dangerous foolishness. Money is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the good life, for happiness and wisdom. Prosperity has different meanings to different people. For some, prosperity is about the accumulation of wealth in the form of money, real estate and equities. For others, prosperity is about the accumulation of power and the achievement of status that comes with appointment to business or government positions. In either case, prosperity requires wisdom: the rational use of one’s resources and in the absence of such wisdom, Aeschylus was correct to speak of prosperous fools.

9. Don’t Do Evil to Others. Evildoing is a dangerous habit, a kind of reflex too quickly resorted to and too easily justified that has a lasting and damaging effect upon the quest for the good life. Harming others claims two victims—the receiver of the harm, and the victimizer, the one who does harm.

Contemporary society is filled with mixed messages when it comes to the treatment of our fellow human beings. The message of the Judaeo-Christian religious heritage, for instance, is that doing evil to others is a sin, extolling the virtues of mercy, forgiveness, charity, love, and pacifism. Yet, as we all know, in practice these inspiring ideals tend to be in very short supply. Modern society is a competitive, hard-bitten environment strongly inclined to advocate self-advantage at the expense of the “other.” Under these conditions, it is not surprising that people are

often prepared to harm their fellow human beings. These activities are frequently justified by invoking premises such as “payback,” “leveling scores,” or “doing unto others, before they can do unto you.” Implicit in all of these phrases is the notion that malice towards others can be justified on either a reciprocal basis or as a pre-emptive gesture in advance of anticipated injury. What is not considered here are the effects these attempts to render evil have upon the person engaging in such attempts. Our culture has naively assumed that “getting even” is an acceptable response to wrongdoing — that one bad-turn deserves another. What we fail to understand is the psychological, emotional, and spiritual impact victimizing others has upon the victimizer.

10. Kindness towards others tends to be rewarded. Kindness to others is a good habit that supports and reinforces the quest for the good life. Helping others bestows a sense of satisfaction that has two beneficiaries—the beneficiary, the receiver of the help, and the benefactor, the one who provides the help.

Many of the world’s great religions speak of an obligation to extend kindness to others. But these deeds are often advocated as an investment toward future salvation — as the admission ticket to paradise. That’s not the case for the ancient Greeks, however, who saw kindness through the lens of reason, emphasizing the positive effects acts of kindness have not just on the receiver of kindness but to the giver of kindness as well, not for the salvation of the soul in the afterlife, but in this life. Simply put, kindness tends to return to those who do kind deeds, as Aesop demonstrated in his colourful fable of a little mouse cutting the net to free the big lion. Aesop lived in the 6th century B.C. and acquired a great reputation in antiquity for the instruction he offered in his delightful tales. Despite the passage of many centuries, Aesop’s counsels have stood the test of time because in truth, they are timeless observations on the human condition; as relevant and meaningful today as they were 2,500 years ago.

Source:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/panosmourdoukotas/2012/01/14/the-ten-golden-rules-on-living-the-good-life/#5c9f307133f>

GURU GOBIND SINGH, THE TENTH SIKH GURU

A few men in this world are born endowed by nature with infinite capacity to face all trials and adversities of life wit...

Guru Gobind Singh (147K)A few men in this world are born, who are endowed by nature with infinite capacity to face all trials and adversities of life with indomitable courage and strength. In

peacetime they work for the betterment of mankind like a beacon of light. In times of calamity they rise up to protect the common men and women against atrocities and tyranny by the oppressive rulers. One such fascinating and dynamic personality was Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru.

Guru Gobind Singh was born in Patna, Bihar (born 22 December 1666---died 7 October 1708). He was a spiritual master, warrior, poet, and

a philosopher. He was the only son of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru, and Mata Gujri. His father Guru Teg Bahadur was publically beheaded in Delhi on 11 November 1675 under the orders of Muslim emperor Aurangzeb for refusing to convert to Islam. The conflict between the Sikhs and the Islamic Empire thereafter continued. After his father's martyrdom, the young Gobind Rai later known as Gobind Singh was installed as the tenth Sikh Guru on 29 March 1676.

He was at that time of a tender age of nine years and a few months. The education of Guru Gobind Singh continued after he became the tenth Guru,

both in reading and writing, as well as in martial arts such as horse riding and archery.

Guru Gobind Singh attained proficiency in many languages like Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, Braj Bhasha and Gurmukhi (script). He was endowed with an exceptional sharp intellect to understand the different scriptures of Hinduism

like the 'Puranas' and the 'Bhagavad Gita.'

Guru Gobind Singh became an adept in the usage of weapons and horse riding at an early age. He had versatile interests and he learnt to play musical instruments also.

Hymns and Shabads were sung to the accompaniment of tabla and harmonium by the assembly of Sangat in his presence.

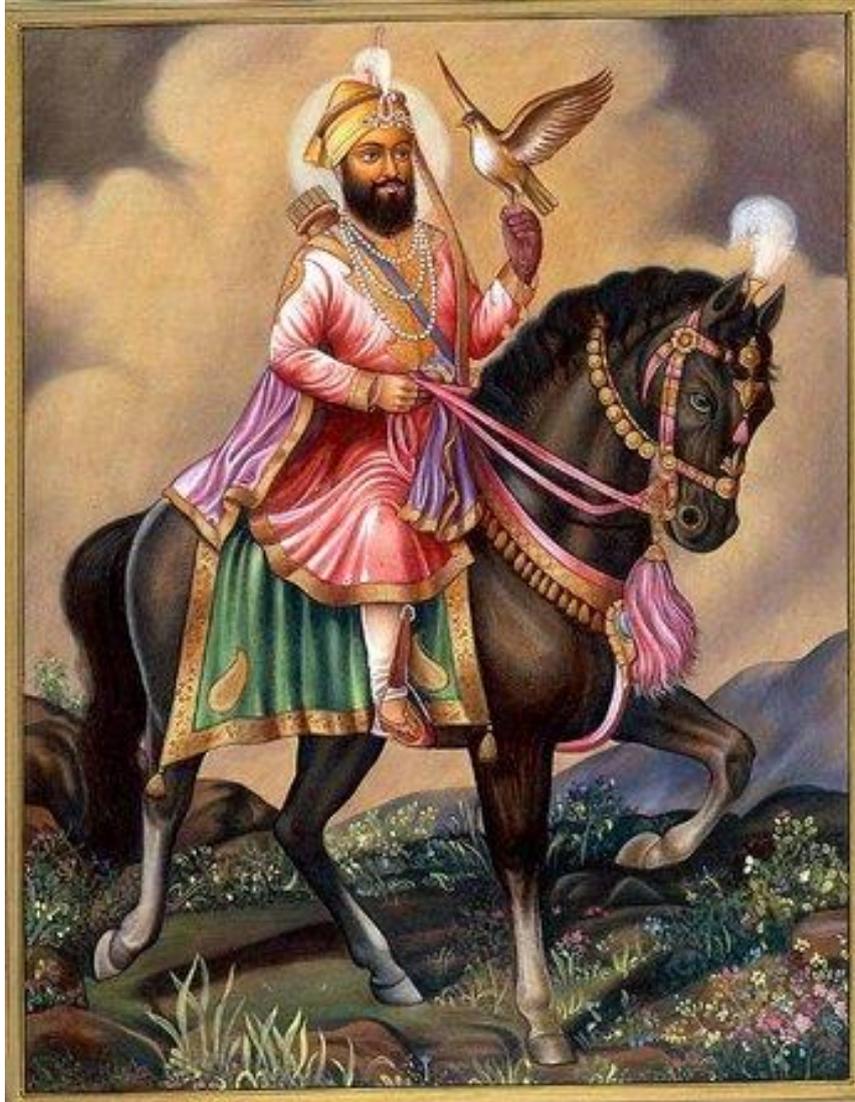
Later after his marriage he had four sons. All his sons died during his lifetime in

Mughal-Sikh

wars. --- Two of his sons died in battle with the Mughal army, while his other two sons were executed by the Mughal Empire.

Among his notable contributions to Sikhism are founding of the Sikh warrior community known as 'Khalsa' in the year 1699, and introducing the Five Ks, which are the five articles of Sikh faith. These five articles are; Kesh: uncut hair; Kanga: a wooden comb; Kara: an iron or steel bracelet worn on the wrist;

These items were of utter necessity at that time as the Sikhs were under constant attacks from the Muslim Mughal army, which could take place at any time of day or night. The Sikh warriors were



told by Guru Gobind Singh to be ready at all times and give a befitting reply to the enemy. Steel Kara and Kirpan were handy items in such hand to hand fights.

Guru Gobind Singh completed the formalisation of the Sikh religion and wrote important texts in his lifetime. He affirmed the scripture of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) as the eternal living Guru of the Sikhs, as there was no further lineage of Guru's after him.

Affirmation (83K) Japji Sahib and Jaap Sahib The Guru Granth Sahib starts with Japji Sahib which was given by Guru Nanak; while the Dasam Granth starts with Jaap Sahib given by Guru Gobind Singh. The Jaap Sahib by Guru Gobind Singh is composed predominantly in Braj-Hindi and Sanskrit language, with a few Arabic words.

The Japji Sahib by Guru Nanak gives hymns stating that one cannot clean the mind just by cleaning the body; by silence alone one cannot

find peace; by food alone one cannot satisfy one's hunger. -- To be purified in body, mind and spirit, one must abide in the eternal love of One God (Akal Purakh- Ek Satnam-Wahe Guru).

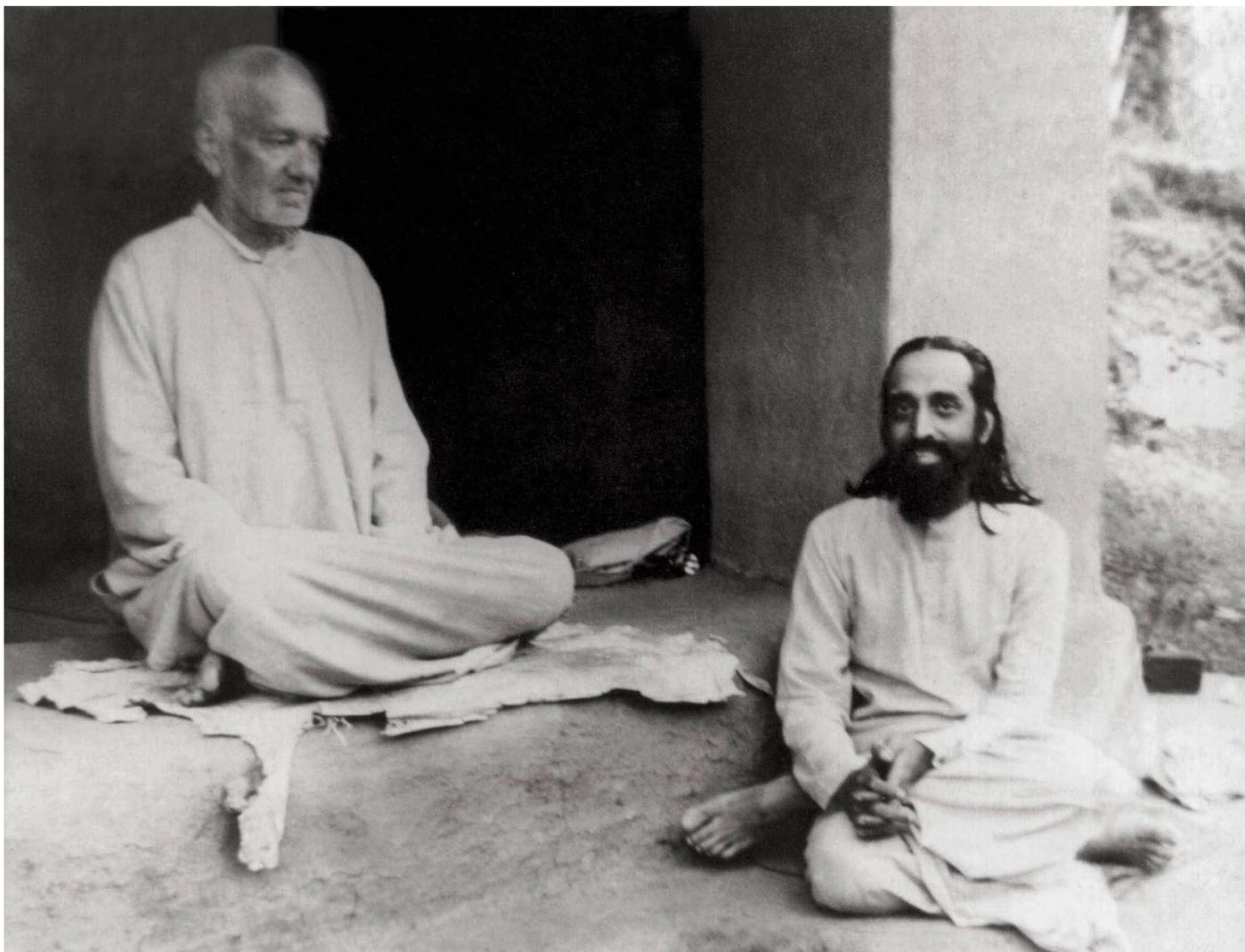
Guru Gobind Singh in his Zafar-Naama addressed to the emperor Aurangzeb said, "When all other lawful means fail, then it is lawful to take to the sword."

Source: <https://www.sikhnet.com/news/guru-gobind-singh-tenth-sikh-guru>



SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA'S SPIRITUAL MISSION

Swami Chinmayananda (1916-1993) was one of the outstanding Indian saints of the twentieth century who sought to lift the people from the mundane to the spiritual level of thinking and living. The century witnessed the passing of the country from political slavery to freedom. The Swamiji, by his speeches and writings, made independent India conscious of its rich legacy of religious thought and practice.



Balakrishnan Menon — the pre-monastic name of Swami Chinmayananda — was born on May 8, 1916, into the family of Vadakke Kurupath Kuttan

Menon, in Ernakulam, Kerala. His activities and attitude, during childhood, adolescence and early youth did not provide any clue to the monumental work this son of Mother India was to undertake. He was a man of sharp intellect, had received modern Western education, and did not accept any belief without questioning. He even disdained religious ceremonies and practices. He had a rational, agnostic mind.

He started his career as a journalist, a sub-editor at the National Herald, Lucknow. Once, on a visit to Rishikesh, he happened to meet Swami Sivananda. As a sceptic, he wanted to get answers to questions about God and life. He repeated his visits to the Ashram and from a sceptic, he transformed into a seeker of truth, the spiritual truth of Being. Swami Sivananda initiated him into sanyasa.

Swami Tapovanam of Uttarakashi was his second Guru. A stern disciplinarian, his teaching methods were unusual. Once a devotee of Swami Tapovanam brought a basket of laddus as an offering. The students studying under him

expected the sweet balls to be distributed among them. No, it did not happen. Instead, the Guru wanted the basket to be kept in his hut. The disappointment of the students was keen. A few students even left the Ashram. One day, the guru asked Chinmaya to bring out the basket and throw it into the Ganga. The guru explained: "You have come here to study the scriptures and not to eat laddus. I noticed your minds were agitated by mere laddus. So this practical lesson was necessary."

JNANA YAGNAS

Swami Chinmayananda's ardent desire to spread the message of the Upanishads to the people at large did not let him lead the life of a recluse. He strongly felt that this divine knowledge was of great value to the people and had the potential to uplift their lives. Swami Tapovanam warned him of the pitfalls of this undertaking but his convictions were too strong to be shaken. He started the dissemination of this knowledge through spiritual discourses called Inana Yagnas.

The first of these Yagnas was conducted in Pune. He did not believe in churning out mere intellectuals who were devoid of feelings. He said, "The spiritual ideas of the intellect must trickle down and melt the heart." So he insisted on singing bhajans, along with the reading of the scriptures. When his disciples prostrated themselves before him he would advise them to worship only God. According to him, if the

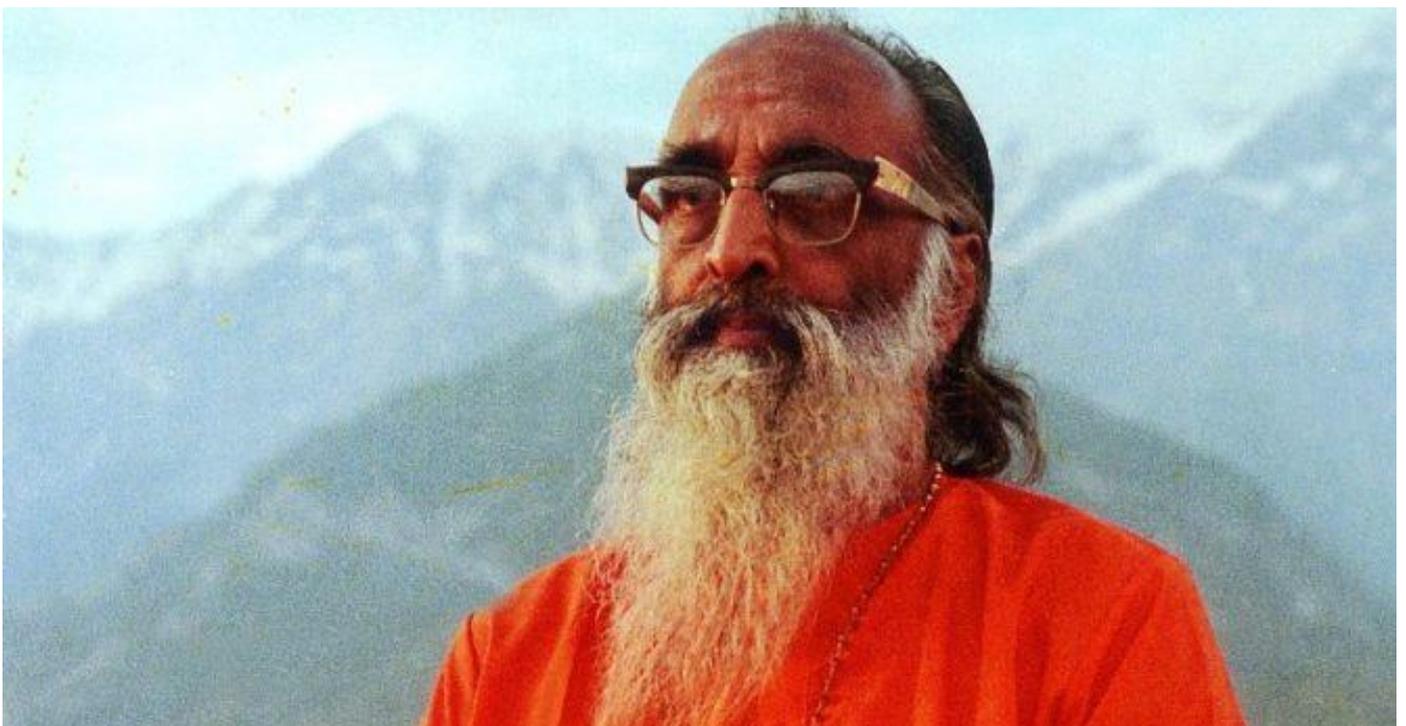
actions and behaviour of a guru did not go down well with them, there was a chance that they would feel hurt and lose faith. Hence, 'worship only the Lord, for He never lets you down'.

Swami

Chinmayananda did not believe in churning out mere intellectuals who were devoid of feelings. He said, "The spiritual ideas of the intellect must trickle down and melt the heart." So he insisted on singing bhajans, along with the reading of the scriptures."

SANDEEPANY SADHANALAYA

In the early 1960s he established Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, a school to instruct brahmacharis in the scriptures, and teach them the eternal truth enshrined in them. Initially, these trained brahmacharis were to go out and spread the message of the scriptures to the masses. Later



they were to go abroad as well. Over a period of four decades, his relentless efforts led to the setting up of scripture-teaching centres, schools, hospitals, etc. The educated agnostic Hindus needed to be made aware of the grand eternal message of their religion. The disinclination on the part of the learned religious scholars to teach the Vedantic philosophy to the public had kept this invigorating and man-making knowledge hidden from them.

When asked profound questions, he would give witty answers which would make the questioners laugh at first, but later, as they reflected on the replies, would help them find the hidden kernel of truth. Once when asked about the experience of Self-realization, he jokingly said that to know, for instance, the nature of electricity one would to put one's finger in a socket, and the shock one would get would be the same anywhere in the world. Likewise, the experience of Self-realisation is the same, across all countries and cultures. When a person got a shock he would cry out: 'Oh! Aah!' An indiscriminating mind would think that since this man had the experience of electricity while shouting 'Oh! Aah!' the way to experience electricity was by chanting the 'Oh! Aah !'mantra. Somewhat similar was the case with seekers who failed to rise above the rituals and in the process, unfortunately, missed the real experience. "Rituals have their importance in purifying the mind, but Self-realisation is the ultimate goal."

GRAND PERSONALITY

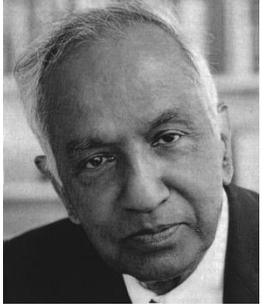
This grand personality of the twentieth century, brought about a spiritual renaissance in our country. He said that/nano Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga were not mutually exclusive. His emphasis was on mnana Yagnas; but, simultaneously, he worked relentlessly to help the downtrodden in the society by setting up institutions such as schools, hospitals, etc. He believed in producing intellectuals who, while steeped in scriptural knowledge, possessed a heart overflowing with love of the Lord, Who is present in all.

“Once when asked about the experience of Self-realization, he jokingly said that to know, for instance, the nature of electricity one would have to put one's finger in a socket, and the shock one would get would be the same anywhere in the world. Likewise, the experience of Self-realisation is the same, across all countries and cultures.”

The Swamiji attained eternity on August 3, 1993, leaving millions of people enlightened about religious discipline and spiritual self-realization.

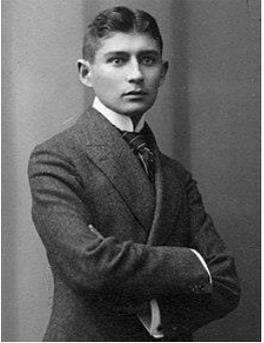
Source: Bhavan's Journal, 15 November, 2018

PERSONS OF THE MONTH: INDIA

<p>Homi J. Bhabha (30 October 1909 – 24 January 1966)</p>		<p>He was the first person to become the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of India. Having started his scientific career in nuclear physics from Great Britain, Bhabha returned to India and played a key role in convincing the Congress Party's senior leaders, most notably Jawaharlal Nehru, to start the ambitious nuclear programme.</p>
<p>Visvesvaraya (15 September 1860 – 12 April 1962)</p>		<p>Sir Mokshagundam Vishweshwaraya KCIE, FASc also spelled as Sir Mokshagondam Vishweshwarayya, popularly known as Sir MV was an Indian Chief civil engineer, scholar, statesman, politician and the 19th Diwan of Mysore, who served from 1912 to 1919. He received India's highest honour, the Bharat Ratna, in 1955.</p>
<p>Chandrashekar (19 October 1910 – 21 August 1995)</p>		<p>Chandrashekar was awarded the 1983 Nobel Prize for Physics for his mathematical theory of black holes. The Chandrasekhar limit is named after him. He was nephew of CV Raman. His most celebrated work concerns the radiation of energy from stars, particularly white dwarf stars, which are the dying fragments of stars. He died on August 21, 1995, at the age of 82 in Chicago.</p>
<p>Subhas Chandra Bose (21 October 1897 – 18 August 1945)</p>		<p>Subhas Chandra Bose (23 January 1897 – 18 August 1945)^{[1][a]} was an Indian nationalist whose defiant patriotism made him a hero in India,^{[2][b][3][c][4][d]} but whose attempt during World War II to rid India of British rule with the help of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan left a troubled legacy.^{[5][e][6][f][2][g]} The honorific Netaji (Hindustani: "Respected Leader"), first applied in early 1942 to Bose in Germany by the Indian soldiers of the Indische Legion and by the German and Indian officials in the Special Bureau for India in Berlin, was later used throughout India.</p>
<p>Vikram Sarabhai (12 August, 1919 – 30 December 1971)</p>		<p>Considered as the Father of India's space programme, Vikram Sarabhai in the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat. He was instrumental in the setting up of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), when he successfully convinced the Indian government of the importance of a space programme for a developing nation after the launch of the Russian Sputnik.</p>

Detailed profiles of these personalities are available in Bhavan's Journals.

PERSONS OF THE MONTH: WORLD

<p>Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci (15 April 1452 – 2 May 1519)</p>		<p>Leonardo da Vinci was an Italian polymath of the Renaissance whose areas of interest included invention, painting, sculpting, architecture, science, music, mathematics, engineering, literature, anatomy, geology, astronomy, botany, writing, history, and cartography. He has been variously called the father of palaeontology, ichnology, and architecture, and he is widely considered one of the greatest painters of all time. Sometimes credited with the inventions of the parachute, helicopter, and tank, he epitomised the Renaissance humanist ideal.</p>
<p>Henry Ford 30 July 1863 – 7 April 1947)</p>		<p>Henry Ford was an American captain of industry and a business magnate, the founder of the Ford Motor Company, and the sponsor of the development of the assembly line technique of mass production.</p>
<p>Bill Gates 28 October 1955 (age 63 years)</p>		<p>William Henry Gates III, KBE, DFBCS is an American business magnate, investor, author, philanthropist, and humanitarian. He is best known as the principal founder of Microsoft Corporation.</p>
<p>Honoré de Balzac (20 May 1799 – 18 August 1850)</p>		<p>Honoré de Balzac born Honoré Balzac, was a French novelist and playwright. The novel sequence <i>La Comédie humaine</i>, which presents a panorama of post-Napoleonic French life, is generally viewed as his magnum opus.</p>
<p>Franz Kafka (3 July 1883 – 3 June 1924)</p>		<p>Franz Kafka was a German-speaking Bohemian Jewish novelist and short story writer, widely regarded as one of the major figures of 20th-century literature. His work, which fuses elements of realism and the fantastic, typically features isolated protagonists faced by bizarre or surrealistic predicaments and incomprehensible social-bureaucratic powers, and has been interpreted as exploring themes of alienation, existential anxiety, guilt, and absurdity. His best known works include "Die Verwandlung" ("The Metamorphosis"), <i>Der Process</i> (The Trial), and <i>Das Schloss</i> (The Castle).</p>

FESTIVALS OF THE MONTH: INDIA

<p>INDIA REPUBLIC DAY 26 January</p>		<p>One of the major national festivals of India, Republic Day is celebrated every year to acknowledge the Constitution of India, which was founded in 1950. The spectacular Republic Day parade that marches down to the central Rajpath avenue and features the three divisions of the armed forces (Army, Navy and Air Force) is a sight worth witnessing.</p>
<p>LOHRI 13 January</p>		<p>Known by different names, this is one the most celebrated festivals in January in India. It signifies the end of the cold winter and arrival of warmer days along with the onset of harvest season. Bonfires, music, and good food are the major highlights of this festivity. So, while you're planning your next visit to India, make sure you get to try all the good food in this festival!</p>
<p>PONGAL 15 – 16 January 2019</p>		<p>Celebrated down south, Pongal is one of the major festivals of January in India, which is equivalent to Thanksgiving. Making rangolis (kolam), cooking the Pongal dish, which is made out of boiled milk and rice, family get together, and dance are some of the reasons why you must become a part of this festive occasion. So, even though you might not belong to this part of India, the locals will make you feel home all the more!</p>
<p>JAISALMER DESERT FESTIVAL 17 – 19 February</p>		<p>This is another exquisite desert festival in Rajasthan that fills the city with magic. While the fancily dressed locals come forward and take part in the turban tying competition and the moustache competition, there are camel races, polo matches, acrobats, puppeteers, and jugglers all around that keep the tourists amused. It surely has something in store for everyone around. So hop in for a wild celebration like never before!</p>
<p>India Heritage Walk Festival (February 2019)</p>		<p>Love heritage? Back for the second edition this year, the award-winning India Heritage Walk Festival offers almost 80 FREE immersive curated walks in more than 35 cities across India. The walks are designed to be thought-provoking and cover issues such as architectural heritage, sustainable tourism, gender-related issues and cultural infusion. Locations include museums, monuments and markets. Participants get an opportunity to interact with local residents and see the cities from a new perspective.</p>

FESTIVALS OF THE MONTH: AUSTRALIA

<p>SYDNEY FESTIVAL 2019 Jan 2019</p>		<p>Every January since 1977, this festival welcomes nearby locals along with tourists from around the globe to join in the fun of hundreds of performances across dozens of stages in one of Australia's most cultural cities. Featuring an incredible variety of acts ranging from classical symphonies to funky jazz quartets to indie bands, Sydney Festival has grown to be one of the largest cultural festivals in the country for good reason!</p>
<p>THREDBO BLUES FESTIVAL Jan 2019</p>		<p>Rarely do musicians put their heartfelt emotions into music anymore. Blues musicians, however, wear their feelings on their sleeves and their instruments. This music festival features Australia's finest blues musicians along with internationally recognized talent, playing what you may assume to be just some corny tunes meant for a sensitive audience. What you're really hearing is raw, emotional power that will inspire a strong bond between the artists and the audience.</p>
<p>SYDNEY CHINESE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL 1 – 10 February 2019</p>		<p>Chinese New Year is a Chinese festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar. The festival is usually referred to as the Spring Festival in modern China, and is one of several Lunar New Years in Asia.</p>
<p>ST. JEROME'S LANEWAY FESTIVAL Jan 2019</p>		<p>St. Jerome's Laneway Festival is a touring music festival that originated in the back of a bar in Melbourne, Australia, and now travels the world instilling its values of community, collaboration, self-expression and fun. Featuring a global lineup of premier musical acts, the Laneway Festival is an amazing experience revelers won't want to miss.</p>
<p>MELBOURNE FASHION FESTIVAL Feb 2019</p>		<p>Formerly known as the L'Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival, famous fashion designers and enthusiastic visitors come here to enjoy the festival. This unique annual festival includes a series of runway events that showcase the latest collections of the top fashion designers around Australia.</p>
<p>BRISBANE COMEDY FESTIVAL Feb 2019</p>		<p>Brisbane Comedy Festival aims to keep the soul in comedy, which the event showcases alongside visual art and other exhibits. The event particularly pays tribute to the work of the Brisbane community, showcasing local artists in the beautiful and historic Brisbane Powerhouse. Brisbane Comedy Festival presents a variety of art and performance styles in a unique, grassroots and people-oriented fashion.</p>

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

In 1917, Sardar Vallabhbhai was elected as the Secretary of the Gujarat Sabha, the Gujarat wing of the Indian National Congress. In 1918, he led a massive "No Tax Campaign" that urged the farmers not to pay taxes after the British insisted on tax after the floods in Kaira. The peaceful movement forced the British authorities to return the land taken away from the farmers. His effort to bring together the farmers of his area brought him the title of 'Sardar'. He actively supported the non-cooperation Movement launched by Gandhi. Patel toured the nation with him, recruited 300,000 members and helped collect over Rs. 1.5 million.

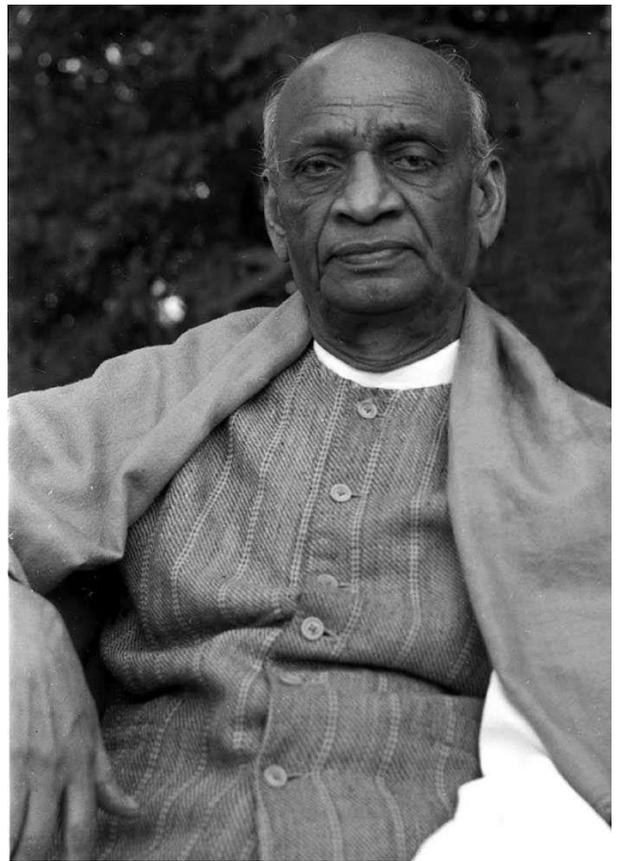
In 1928, the farmers of Bardoli again faced a problem of "tax-hike". After prolonged summons, when the farmers refused to pay the extra tax, the government seized their lands in retaliation. The agitation took on for more than six months. After several rounds of negotiations by Patel, the lands were returned to farmers after a deal was struck between the government and farmers' representatives.

In 1930, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was among the leaders imprisoned for participating in the famous Salt Satyagraha movement initiated by Mahatma Gandhi. His inspiring speeches during the "Salt Movement" transformed the outlook of numerous people, who later played a major role in making the movement successful. He led the Satyagraha movement across Gujarat when Gandhi was under imprisonment, upon request from the congress members.

Sardar Patel was freed in 1931, following an agreement signed between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India. The treaty was popularly known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The same year, Patel was elected as the President of Indian National Congress in its Karachi session where the party deliberated its future path. Congress committed itself towards defence of fundamental and human rights. It was in this session that the dream of a secular nation was conceived.

During the legislative elections of 1934, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel campaigned for the Indian National Congress. Though he did not contest, Sardar Patel helped his fellow party mates during the election. In the 1942 Quit India Movement, Patel continued his unwavering support to Gandhi when several contemporary leaders criticized the latter's decision. He continued travelling throughout the country propagating the agenda of the movement in a series of heart-felt speeches. He was arrested again in 1942 and was imprisoned in the Ahmednagar fort till 1945 along with other Congress leaders.

Sardar Patel's journey often saw a number of confrontations with other important leaders of the congress. He voiced his annoyance at Jawaharlal Nehru openly when the latter adopted socialism in 1936. Patel was also wary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and considered him to be "keen on more power within the party".



Source: <https://www.culturalindia.net/leaders/sardar-vallabhbhai-patel.html>

Guru for the Hindus, a Fir for the Muslims — that was uru Nanak.

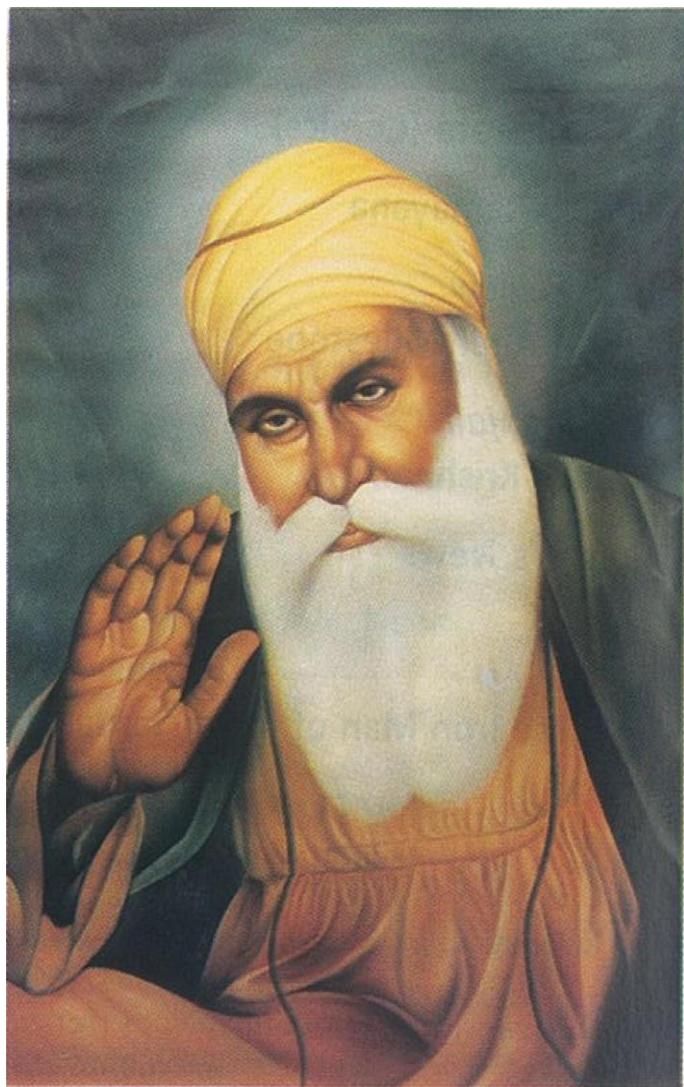
Born in a humble home, in Rai Bholki Todwandi village, near Lahore, now in Pakistan, far away from any seats of learning and culture, on November 5, 1469. Guru Nanak's father, Mehta Kalu, was a patwari, a rank which was fairly high in the Revenue Department of those days.

His parents cherished Nanak as the delight of their eyes. Nanak was in his ninth year when his father, on an auspicious day, took him to the village Pandit. Nanak left an said: "Mehtaji, this son of yours is an Avatara, an incarnation of God. He has come to redeem the victims of Kaliyug."

True to the Pandit's prediction, Guru Nanak grew as a real son of India, a labourer, a farmer, a shop-keeper, a government servant, a preacher, a patriot, poet and prophet— all in one. He knew first hand how the patwaris often sucked farmers' blood and how the latter groaned under increasing burden of taxation of an alien government. All that found expression in his poems. At the age of seven, he sang of the little ailments to which the Society was prone — the misplaced emphasis on the sacred thread, the touch-me-not evils of caste which strangled the vitals of the society.

Equality between the high and the low, between man and man, between man and woman, between the ruler and ruled — this was the great message of Guru Nanak. This he instilled into the hearts of his fellowmen. In short, he sowed the seed of a spiritual democracy.

He strove to bring Hindus and Muslims together. His life and teachings were a symbol of the harmony between the two communities. Yet Nanak was critical of the formalism of both the Hindus and the Muslims. He went to bathe in the Ganges, as is usual with devout Hindus. When the Hindus threw water towards the rising sun as an offering to their ancestors, Nanak threw water in the opposite direction. When questioned, he said: "I am watering my fields in the Punjab. If you can throw water to the dead in the heaven, I should send it to a place on Earth."



On another occasion, he fell asleep with his feet towards Mecca. When an outraged Mulla drew his attention to it, Nanak answered: "If you think I show disrespect by having my feet towards the house of God, turn them in some other direction where God does not dwell."

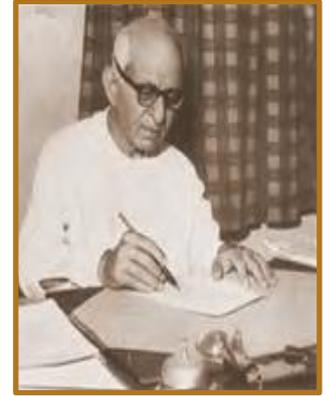
Guru Nanak left for his heavenly abode on September 5, 1539. When he died, Hindus erected a Samadhi and Muslims a tomb at Kartar Pur— fitting tributes to the Apostle of the Essential Unity of all Religions.

From Bhavan's Journal, 17 November, 19687

Kulapativani

Students Bring Sunshine

True service, apart from great national crisis where the student must render every assistance, is to bring sunshine in whatever sphere he moves in. It is as great a service as any man can render. An ailing sister in the house; a lonely mother who needs company; an unfortunate neighbour who needs aid; a passer-by who is in distress; a victim of crime as you go along the street; some unfortunate who is being sacrificed at the altar of a social, economic or communal evil; a riot where the innocent requires protection even at the cost of life; a city without sweepers which wants volunteers for scavenging; a great occasion to be organised which needs service; a village needing education for social welfare; a night class where the poor have to be taught; — these are spheres of service in which every student can bring not only help but sunshine.



Dr K.M. Munshi
Founder, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

The Test of Bhavan's Right to Exist

The test of Bhavan's right to exist is whether those who work for it in different spheres and in different places and those who study in its many institutions can develop a sense of mission as would enable them to translate the fundamental values, even in a small measure, into their individual life.

Creative vitality of a culture consists in this: whether the 'best' among those who belong to it, however small their number, find self-fulfilment by living up to the fundamental values of our ageless culture.

It must be realized that the history of the world is a story of men who had faith in themselves and in their mission. When an age does not produce men of such faith, its culture is on its way to extinction. The real strength of the Bhavan, therefore, would lie not so much in the number of its buildings or institutions it conducts, nor in the volume of its assets and budgets, nor even in its growing publication, culture and educational activities. It would lie in the character, humility, selflessness and dedicated work of its devoted workers, honorary and stipendiary. They alone can release the regenerative influences, bringing into play the invisible pressure which alone can transform human nature.



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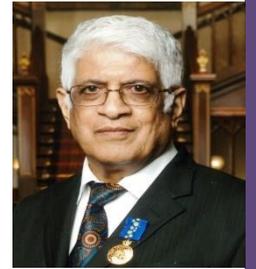
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